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PUNJABI UNIVERSITY PATIALA

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Punjabi University, Patiala

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## MINISTERS IN ANCIENT NORTHERN INDIA AS DEPICTED IN THE INSCRIPTIONS FROM c. 300 B.C. TO 650 A.D.

J.K. Jain \*

The inscriptions are an important source of information for reconstructing the history of administration in ancient India. No doubt, they are donative but they supply ample data regarding the administrative system prevalent in actual practice. This article embodies some aspects of the ministers in ancient northern India as depicted in the inscriptions from c. 300 B.C. to 650 A.D.

In ancient northern India the works and the responsibilities of the king were manifold and diverse, therefore, it was impossible for him to perform all the functions single handed. He therefore, appointed ministers for the successful accomplishment of all the functions of the state. The Third<sup>1</sup> and Sixth<sup>2</sup> rock edicts of Maurya King Asoka describe the term '*Palisa*' which has been translated by K.P. Jayaswal<sup>3</sup> as the '*Mantriprisad*' as mentioned in the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya. The proof as supplied by the Junagarh inscription<sup>4</sup> of Saka *Mahakshtrapa* for the existence of ministers called *Matisaciva* in the Province also make it believable that some sort of council of ministers must have existed at the state level, i.e., in the central administration of the Sakas. Although the inscriptions of the Kusanas do not give any information regarding the council of ministers yet the inscriptions of the Guptas frequently denote the functioning of the council in the Gupta empire. The Gupta king Kumaragupta had a council of ministers which is evident from the reference

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1. E. Hultzsch, *Inscriptions of Ashoka, C.I.I. Vol.-I*, New Delhi, rpt. 1969, p. 4 ff; E.I., II, p.450.
2. *Ibid.*, p.12 ff; E.I., II, p.454.
3. *I.A.*, 42, p. 283.
4. D.C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions bearing on Indian History and Civilization*, Vol. I, from 6th century. B.C. to 6th century A.D., Calcutta, 1965, p.180, fn.5.

(च) महा (क्ष) त्रप (स्य) मत्तिसचिव-गुण कर्मसचिवैरमात्य-गुण समुद्यक्तैरप्यति महत्त्वा-दुभेदस्यानुत्साह -विमुख -  
मत्तिभिः (:) प्रत्यारव्यातारम( ) ।

in the Bilsad Pillar inscription<sup>5</sup> to the honouring of Dhruvarman by the *parisad*. Besides, the inscriptions of the Guptas and their feudatories describe certain ranks of the ministers. For instance the Allahabad stone pillar inscription<sup>6</sup> of Samudragupta, the Udaigiri cave inscription of Chandragupta-II<sup>7</sup> the Khoh copper plate inscriptions (year 156 and 163)<sup>8</sup> frequently mention *Sandhivigrahika* or *Mahasandhivigrahika* (Foreign Minister or Minister of War and Peace) and *Amatya* (Revenue Minister). The Karmadanda Siva Linga Inscription<sup>9</sup> of Kumaragupta-I and Khoh copper plate inscriptions of Maharaja Sarvanatha<sup>10</sup> reveal *Mantri* (councillor) and *Mahabaladhikrita* (commander in chief of the army), respectively.

These inscriptions, however, do not reveal much about the precise number of ministers or the different ranks within the council of ministers one has to turn to the literary sources in order to analyse whatever information the inscriptions supply in this regard. Evidently, the school of Manava recommends that the council of ministers should consist of 12 *Amatyas*, while Brihaspati<sup>11</sup> and Ausanasa<sup>12</sup> delineate that the number should be 16 and 20 respectively. Kautilya<sup>13</sup> mentions a council of ministers called *Mantri Parisad*. He, however, points out that the council should consist of three or four *Mantrins* but as many *Amatyas* as the need of the business of administration

5. D.C. Sircar, *S.I.*, p. 286, L-9 त ..... (ष)र्षदा मानितेन ध्रुवशर्मरा कर्म महाकृतेदम् ।
6. J.F. Fleet, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta kings and their successors, C.I.I.*, Vol. III, Varanasi, rpt. 1970. J.F. Fleet, interprets the *Sandhivigrahika* 'an officer for peace and war', whose other synonymous titles are *Sandhivigrahikrita* ( *I.A.*, Vol. VIII, p. 70, 11, 17f )  
*Sandhivigrahikarandhikrita* ( *I.A.*, Vol. IV, p. 175, 1-18 ) and *Sandhivigrahin* ( *I.A.*, Vol. VIII, p. 20 ).  
The next grade above this that of the *Mahasandhivigrahika* occurs in the copper plate inscription of Maharaja Hastin year 163, No. 22 (J.F. Fleet, *op. cit.*, p. 16 fn 4.).  
K. P. Jayaswal, however, interprets *Sandhivigrahika* as Junior Minister and *Mahasandhivigrahika* as Senior Minister of foreign affairs ( *Hindu Polity*, pp. 305-61 ); D. C. Sircar, translates *Sandhivigrahika* as Minister of war and peace, *S.I.*, p. 268, fn. 1.
7. D.C. Sircar, *S.I.*, pp. 279 - 80.
8. J.F. Fleet, *op. cit.*, pp. 100, 105 & 109.
9. D.C. Sircar, *S.I.*, p. 290.
10. J.F. Fleet, *op. cit.*, p. 129 and p. 134. (म)हाव (ब)लाधिकृतक्षत्रिय शिवगुप्त ।
11. *Arthasastra* of Kautilya, ed. & tr. by R. Shamasastary, Mysore, 1961, p. 15.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*

demands. Manu<sup>14</sup> recom mends smaller number of ministers. Sukra<sup>15</sup> describes a ministry of ten, but on the other hand, he recommends a smaller body of 7-8 members. It is worthwhile to mention here that neither the inscriptions nor the literary sources pertaining to the post-maurya and Gupta times refer to *purohita*, the most important minister in the council of the Mauryas. According to R.S. Sharma, the absence of the priestly office was more than made up by the ascription of divine attributes to the king.<sup>16</sup> Thus it is evident that the principle of divinity of the king may have led to the diminishing importance to the *Purohita* (Royal Chaplain) in the Kusana and Gupta times, and that is why the inscrip-tional sources and the contemporary literature do not speak about it. The de-scription reveal that the council of ministers in ancient states of northern India could be appointed according to the need of the state administration, or accord-ing to the jurisdiction of the kingdom. The notable feature regarding the mem-bers of the council is that the status and pay of each succeeding minister were lower than those of the preceding one, for example the *purohita* and the *Senapati* 48,000 *panas* a year, Revenue and Treasury (finance) ministers 24,000 *panas* and the rest 12,000 *panas*.<sup>17</sup>

The inscriptions provide valuable information about the qualifications considered necessary for the appointments of ministers in northern India. These qualifications included skill in military matters such as leadership, the use of weapons and valour. Great importance was also attached to the qualities of scholarship both in poetics and in politics. This is proved by the Allahabad stone pillar inscription and the Udaigiri cave inscription. The Allahabad stone pillar inscription<sup>18</sup> of Samudragupta evidently reveals how Harisena demon-strated his skill in penmanship and who due to his ability held several portfolios simultaneously. Further, the Udaigiri cave inscription<sup>19</sup> of Chandragupta-II

14. *Manu Smriti*, Skt. text and Hindi tr. by Kesava Prasad Sharma Divedi, Bombay, 1923, VII.54.

15. *Sukranitisara*, tr. by B.K. Sarkar, New Delhi, 1975, II, 71-72, Cf. Shivaji's *Astha Pradhana*:

1. *Peshwa* (Prime Minister), 2. *Senapati*, 3. *Amatya*, 4. *Saciva*, 5. *Mantri*.

6. *Sumant*, 7. *Panditrao*, 8. *Nyayadhisa*. K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, 2nd ed., Banglore, 1955, pp. 282-83.

16. R.S. Sharma, *Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India*, rpt. 1991, p. 384.

17. *A.S.*, V, 3.

18. J.F. Fleet., *op. cit.*, p.6 ff. खाद्यतपाकिकस्य महादण्डनायकध्वभूति पुत्रस्य सन्धिविग्रहिककुमारामात्यम् (हादण्डनाय) कहरिणेणस्य सर्वभूतिहितसुखायास्तु

19. D C. Sircar, *S.I.*, pp. 279 - 80.

कौत्वग्शाव इतिख्याति वीर सेनः कुलस्थया शब्दार्थन्याय लोकज्ञ कवि पाटलिपुत्रक। J.F. Fleet, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-36.

refers to Saba as being grounded in the science of poetics and politics. It shows that highly qualified and experienced persons were appointed as ministers. However the references of Harisena, who was a Foreign Minister and chief of all the forces under Samudragupta and Saba, Foreign Minister, who accompanied Chandragupta-II in a campaign of conquest of Malwa and Gujrat, undoubtedly prove that the military leadership was the most important qualification for the minister during the Gupta times.

But the inscriptions clearly mention that caste was considered as one of the most important qualifications to the appointment of the ministers. The Karmadanda Siva Linga inscription<sup>20</sup> of Kumaragupta -I refers to a *brahmana* minister. Further, the surnames of the Suryadatta and his son Vibhudatta (*Sandhivigrahas*) mentioned in the Majhgawan copper plate inscriptions<sup>21</sup> of the Parivrajikas (feudatories of the Guptas) suggest that they belonged to the *brahmana* community. However, the writings of the Greek writer as well as Indian classical writers corroborate the view and provide more data to us in analysing the role of the caste factor for the post of ministers. Megasthenes<sup>22</sup> states that the advisors (ministers) were selected from a particular caste, i.e., the seventh Caste which is a small class and is distinguished by superior wisdom and justice. Yajnavalkya<sup>23</sup> prefers *brahmanas* of and hereditary and noble descent to be appointed as ministers. Manu<sup>24</sup> prescribes heredity, nobility, loyalty for the post of ministers. Bana Bhatta<sup>25</sup> in *Kadambari* describes Sukanasa as a *brahmana* minister whose intelligence was fixed in all affairs of the Kingdom.

Thus the references of ancient writers and the references of inscriptions substantiate the fact that the *brahmanas* and the nobles were appointed ministers during the period under study. Despite the abundant information regarding the council of ministers the constitutional procedure adopted for choosing it remains unexplained if not ambiguous. It seems that the fidelity towards the throne was the sole criterion for inclusion of some persons in the

20. R.K. Choudhary, *Prachin Bhartiya Abhilekha*, Meerut, p. 60.

21. J.F. Fleet, *op. cit.*, No. 22, p. 105; No.23, p. 109

लिखितं च वक्रामात्यप्रनप्तुनप्रा भौगिक नरदत्तप्रनप्रा रविदत्त नप्रा सूर्यदत्त पुत्रेरा महासन्धिविग्राहिक विभुदत्तनेति (1\*) महाव (ब) लाधकृत्नागसिद्धेदूतकः ।

22. J.W.Mc. Crindle, *Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, Calcutta, 1972, p. 85.

23. *Yajnavalkya Smriti with Vikramitrodaya and Mitakshara*, Benaras, 1930, I. 312.

24. *Manu*, VII, 226.

25. *Kadambari* of Bana Bhatta, tr. by C.M. Ridding, 1896, pp. 49-50.

council of ministers because, in fact, the council had no independent powers and existed only to ditto the wishes and orders of the monarch. The consideration of the caste factor for selection of minister also shows that the monarchs used to be prejudiced while framing the council of ministers. The caste system was thus strengthened officially.

Evidence is also available to show that in some cases the ministerial post passed on from father to his son. In other words, it had hereditary character. The Allahabad stone pillar inscription of Samudragupta states that the posts of *Khadyatapakika*<sup>26</sup> and *Mahadandanayaka* were held by Dhruvabhuti while his son Harisena also worked as *Sandhivigrahika*, *Kumaramatya* and *Mahadandanayaka* during the reign of the Guptas.<sup>27</sup> The Udaigiri cave inscription of Chandragupta-II states Virasena Saba or Pataliputra as *Sandhivigrahika* (Foreign Minister) by hereditary descent. Similarly the Kanda inscription of Kumaragupta-I reveals that both Prithvisena and his father worked as *Mantrins* during the reign of Kumaragupta-I. In the Majhgawan copper plate inscription<sup>28</sup> of Maharaja Hastin, it has been recorded that Suryadatta held the post of Foreign Minister under the *Parivrajikas* while his son Vibhudatta later worked on the same post in 510 A.D. The Khoh copper plate inscriptions<sup>29</sup> of *Ucchkalpa* (year 177 and 193) mention that Gullu (496 A.D.) and his brother Manoratha (512 A.D.) worked as Foreign Ministers during the reign of Maharaja Sarvanatha. The emphasis on the principle of heredity tends to counter the importance of the elements of ability and competence in the appointment of ministers. In this connection one tends to agree with P.L. Gupta<sup>30</sup> who suggests that the inheritance of ministerial posts appear to have been in continuance for several generations, the incumbents holding their posts with all their powers and influence.

Another feature regarding the ministerial posts, as reflected in the inscriptions was the holding of several portfolios by a person simultaneously. Though the King usually preferred to appoint one minister to look after one department in order to ensure competence, yet in the absence of sufficient number of able persons he allocated more than one portfolio to single person of merit.

26. D.C. Sircar translates *Khadyatapakika* as head of royal kitchens; D.C. Sircar, *S.I.*, p. 268, fn.1.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 274.

28. J.F. Fleet, *op. cit.*, No. 23, L-18, p. 109.

29. *Ibid.*, No. 27, p. 124; No. 29, p. 129.

30. P.L. Gupta, *The Imperial Guptas*, Vol-II, Varanasi, 1979, p.18.

As a matter of fact, the Allahabad stone pillar inscription<sup>31</sup> of Samudragupta mentions that Harisena held the post of *Kumaramatya*, *Sandhivigrahika* and *Mahādandanayaka* simultaneously. P.L Gupta<sup>32</sup> suggests that the lack of able and trustworthy people and the method of economy in expenses led to the combination of several posts at a time. But it appears that holding of several posts simultaneously by a minister may have also affected the efficiency in the administration both ways – first the system affected the efficiency of a minister in particular and secondly, it weakened the control of the central Government over the bureaucracy during the period.

Apart from the composition and qualifications of the council of ministers, the inscriptions also throw welcome light on their functions. It is evident from the Third rock edict<sup>33</sup> of King Asoka that the duty of the council of ministers was to order the officials, i.e., *Yuktas*, to register new administrative decisions (measures) taken by the King. Thus the council of ministers was entrusted with the job of enactment and execution of the policy decided by the King. Further the Sixth rock edict<sup>34</sup> of the Maurya King depicts the council of ministers as more powerful, since in his absence it could take up any emergent matter the discussion of which the King may have left to the council. However, in that case the opinion of the members of the council was to be reported to the King urgently, wherever he may be. Likewise, the Junagarh rock inscription<sup>35</sup> of Rudradaman, the Saka *Mahakshtrapa*, states that the important matters regarding finance were generally referred to the council of ministers; though the final decision always rested with the King. According to the Bilsad pillar inscription<sup>36</sup> of Kumaragupta-I the next duty of the council of ministers was to honour the poets and scholars on particular occasions. The Udaigiri cave inscription<sup>37</sup> of Chandragupta-II and the Karmadanda Siva Linga inscription<sup>38</sup> of Kumaragupta-I frequently show that some ministers had extra military qualifications and also accompanied the king to the battle fields. It appears that the services of

31. J.F. Fleet, *op. cit.*, p.16.

32. P.L. Gupta, *op. cit.*, pp.18-19.

33. E. Hultzsch, *op. cit.*, p.4 ff. परिसा भिमुते आजपयिसति गणनायहेतुतो च व्यंजनेता च ।

34. *Ibid.*, p.12 ff. यच्च किञ्चि मुखतो प्रपयामि स्वयं दायक व/सावायक वा ध वा पुन महामात्रेस आचाधिके अरोपित भवति ताप अथाय विवादोनिकती वसन्तो परिसाय आवंटर परिवेदेतव्यं मे सर्वत्र सर्वकाले ।

35. D.C. Sircar, *S.I.*, p. 180; *E.I.*, VIII, p.49.

36. *Ibid.*, p.286, 1-9.

37. *Ibid.*, pp. 279-80.

38. D.C. Sircar, *S.I.*, p.290.

*Sandhivigrahika* were required in both making peaceful and harmonious relations or declaration of war with the other kingdoms. Further the importance of the ministerial post is testified by the Nalanda stone inscription<sup>39</sup> of the reign of Yasodharman which refers to a minister who is described as a Margapati (the guardian of the passes), Udicipati (the lord of the north or the chief guardian of the passes of the north).

A study of these inscriptions show that the council of ministers during the period under study registered a gradual growth in its functions and influence. In the beginning it was confined to getting the decisions of the King executed by the officials as is evident from the Third rock edict. The Sixth rock edict of Asoka installed a few years later shows that the council had begun to consider matters of urgent importance but subject to the final approval of the king. During the reign of the *Sakas* the council of ministers gained the powers of considering and taking decisions on financial matters though the final decision still rested with the King. The area of the functions of this body further increased during the Gupta period when the ministers had the powers to honour luminaries besides accompanying the king on his war expeditions and carrying out the responsibilities entrusted to them. However, no inscription of the later kings supplies any information regarding the powers and functions of the council of ministers.

The ancient writers on polity seem to be more informative than the inscriptions in this regard. Kautilya<sup>40</sup> mentions that the council of ministers was presided over by the King himself, ministers were expected to observe strict secrecy regarding the matters of discussion and decisions, every effort was made to maintain the secrecy. Though Kautilya was in favour of joint consultation with three or four ministers, whose portfolios may have been connected with the matter yet he advised that in case of emergency a meeting of both - the council of *Amatyas* and *Mantrins* be held and instruct the king to accept the decision of majority or what appear to him to be beneficial to the state. Manu<sup>41</sup> prescribes that the ministers are to look after the day-to-day functioning of the state during the illness of the king - a prerogative which a Kautilyan minister did not possess. Kamandaka<sup>42</sup> classifies the ministers into three broad divisions-

39. E.I., XX, p.37 ff.

40. *Arthasastra* of Kautilya and Chanakya Sutra, ed. & tr. by Vachaspati Gairola, Varanasi, 1984, I. 10, 14.

41. Manu, VII, 226.

42. *Kamandaka Nitisara*, ed. by T. Ganapati Sastri Trivandrum, 1912, rpt. 1982.

- *Mantrins*, *Sacivas* and *Amatyas*. He does not lay down the duty of individual minister, but collectively they were called upon to hold counsel to look after the income and expenditure, to administer justice, to subjugate enemies and to protect the King and the kingdom. He even mentions the presence of the minister in the army camp, entrusts him with the responsibility to stop the revolts of the frontier guards, and the foresters. Sukra<sup>43</sup> however, supply invaluable information regarding the working of the ministry. He delineates that each minister should normally have two secretaries, but their number may be increased if the work of the department demands this step. Conversely if a department was very small, the secretary was often dispensed with.

A secretary was often promoted to the position of the minister in due course, if he had proved his capacity by his work and achievements. Sukra also recommends the occasional transfer of ministers from one portfolio to another. This was intended partly to offer scope to able ministers to get the change of departments, more important than those to which they were originally appointed. That such changes in portfolios were often taking place in practice is shown by the case of Prithvisena, who was previously an ordinary minister (*Mantrin*), but was later promoted to the post of the *Sandhivigrahika* (Foreign Minister).

The account of Hiuen Tsang<sup>44</sup> provide a glimpse regarding the powers and functions of the ministers. The Chinese pilgrim tells how Harsavardhana, was chosen King of Thanesar after the death of Rajyavardhana by the council of ministers. He adds further when the throne of Kanauj fell vacant after the assassination of Maukhari King Grahavarman the ministers in a meeting offered the crown to Harsavardhana. Hiuen Tsang also refers to the case of a minister of Asoka who had declined to comply with the King's(Asoka's) desire to give away all his possessions in charity, as a depleted treasury would have adversely affected the financial condition of the state and this suggests that the ministers enjoyed much power and authority. It also reveals that the ministers in central administration were not merely advisors and puppets in the hands of the king in ancient India, they occasionally performed important function by dint of their ability and influence and declined to comply with the King's desire in case they did not consider it proper. But the cases of such fearless and bold ministers

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43. *Sukraniti*, II, 115.

44. *Si-yuki* of Hiuen Tsang tr. & ed. by S. Beal, "The Buddhist Records of the Western World - I," London, 1884, rpt., pp. 210-16.

were few and far between. They were royal servants and not the actual representatives of the people as in the modern time. So they usually worked under pressure and as per the wishes of the monarch.

In view of what has been said above a few inferences suggesting progressive trends in the formation of the ministry, may be drawn.

Firstly, there had been increase in the horizontal and vertical functional division of administrative responsibilities of ministers during the period. There was evolution of the council of ministers and gradually it acquired sufficient powers. Some of the ministers in fact, discharged their duties efficiently and effectively. Secondly, the numerical strength of the ministry shows increase and the designations of the ministers suggested change.

Notwithstanding, the progressive trend the following drawbacks and lacunae may also be pointed out:-

First, there was no uniformity in rules in regard to the number of ministers in the ancient Indian administration. The ministers were appointed as per the wishes of the King who enjoyed unfettered powers in those days. Secondly, the ministers were royal servants and did not enjoy constitutional powers as in the modern period. So they could not put any effective restraint in the autocracy of the King who could nullify the decisions of his ministers and adopt any course of action according to his own discretion. Barring aside some precedents, the ministers appear to be merely advisors and implementors of the King's orders and decrees received by them. Thirdly, holding of several portfolios by one minister simultaneously may have affected the efficiency of the administration, and further weakened the control of the central government over the bureaucracy. And Finally, though the criteria for the ministerial posts was fixed through the several tests and qualifications, yet the heredity, high birth and loyalty to the throne invariably appear to be important considerations while making the appointments of the ministers. The *brahmanas* and *kshatriyas* were appointed on the higher posts. The accent on high birth, heredity control created a class of rulers and ruled in the society. Consequently, the people belonging to non-ruling class had hardly any opportunity to get appointment on merit in the administrative set up of ancient India.

## SILK OR COSTUS ROUTE ? – AN APPRAISAL OF CENTRAL ASIAN TRADE ROUTES

Suman Jamwal (Rana) \*

Establishment of Kushana authority over India and certain areas of Central Asia alongwith the simultaneous growth of the Roman Empire in the west gave impetus to the rise and subsequent development of the land route connection between China, India, West Asia and Rome.<sup>1</sup> Indian wood became popular in Persia as early as the sixth century B.C., and costus(*Kutha*) was treated as very precious item by the Syrian Greeks.<sup>2</sup> The theory that sea-voyage became comfortable when Roman Hippalus came to know about the trend of the monsoon about 45 A.D., is now a days treated as Roman ethno centric nonsense. Certain evidences concerning the early medieval days show that even Central Asian goods were brought to the parts of Sindh for their further sail to western Asia.<sup>3</sup> Yet trade got an extra ordinary boost due to the land routes connecting India, Rome and China. These routes were later on became famous as silk routes as silk was carried to Rome from China through them.<sup>4</sup>

However, when we go through the Roman accounts, then we find that Indian goods were much more in demand in relation to those from China. It was due to the reason that the contacts between the Kushana rulers and the Romans had been well established. This can be inferred on the basis of the fact that numerous embassies on behalf of the Kushanas were sent to Rome.<sup>5</sup> The prod-

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1. R.C.Majumdar, "India and the Western World" and "Colonial and Cultural Expansion" included in Majumdar, R.C. and others, eds., *The Age of Imperial Unity*, Bombay, 1980, pp. 613-25, 645-46.
2. *Ibid.*, pp.612-13; *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (translated by W.H.Scoff), New York, 1912, p.169; Seleucus is said to have presented one pound of costus to one of his friends.
3. Lallanji Gopal, *The Economic Life of Northern India C.A.D. 700 -1200*, Delhi, 2nd Revised edition, 1989, pp.148-50.
4. E.H.Warmington, *The Commerce Between Roman Empire and India*, Revised 11nd edition, Delhi, 1974, pp. 152, 160-161, 247-248; Moti Chandra' *Trade and Routes in Ancient India*, Delhi, 1977, pp. 124-27.
5. M.P. Charles Worth, *Trade Routes and Commerce of the Roman Empire*, Helesheim, 1961, p. 62.

ucts which were having consumption in Asia and Rome were woollen goods, *Kutha* (Costus), Saffron, Spices etc.<sup>6</sup> *Kutha* was one of the most important items of trade. On the basis of the information, we learn that it was this commodity which was required most by the Romans. Here it was in the first place used for scenting shawls.<sup>7</sup> It was also used in preparing the ointments, medicine, perfumes and the scenting of food and their seasoning of wine.<sup>8</sup> Alongwith this, it was used in sacrifices and in the preservation of fruits.<sup>9</sup> The *Periplus of Erythraean Sea* mentions its export to Rome through Patala, Barbaricum and Barygaza alongwith the land routes.<sup>10</sup> Pliny has remarked upon the pungent taste and the pleasant smell of costus.<sup>11</sup> He also refers to two kinds of costus which were found at Patala especially at the entrance to the Indus.<sup>12</sup> After the downfall of the Rome too, its trade continued as it was in demand in other countries also. The woollen goods especially the *pashmina* shawls from Kashmir were exported to Rome and other Western countries and fetched considerable amount of foreign gold to India.<sup>13</sup>

Thus India in times of Pliny "was annually drawing the Roman empire of its gold valued at fifty million sesterces"<sup>14</sup> The statement is supported from the hoards of Roman coins which were found at several places close to the South Indian Coast.<sup>15</sup> Denari of Augustus and Tiberius were reported from Hazara district of Punjab of Pakistan also though the north-west was completely devastated first by the Hunas in the first century A.D. and later by the Ghaznavides in the eleventh century A.D.<sup>16</sup>

Besides this, we also know that at least three land routes, passing through Central Asia, connected India with China since early days due to the efforts of

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6. E.H. Warmington, *op.cit.*, pp. 152, 160-61, 247-48.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 197-98.

8. E.H. Warmington, *op.cit.*, pp. 197-98; Moti Chandra, *op.cit.*, p. 126.

9. E.H. Warmington, *op.cit.*, pp. 197-98.

10. *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, English translation by J.W. Mc Grindle, (Reprint,) Patna, 1987, p. 109.

11. E.H. Warmington, *op.cit.*, p. 198.

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid.*, p. 160.

14. J.W. Mc Grindle, *Ancient India as Described in Classical Literature*, Patna, 1987, p. 125; R.C. Majumdar, *op.cit.*, p. 621.

15. R.C. Majumdar, *op.cit.*, pp. 621-23.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 621.

the Buddhists.<sup>17</sup> It was because of the proselytizing efforts of the Buddhist monks of the Kashmir and China that the safe transit of traders' carvanas could become possible through areas inhabited by less civilized people. The monks therefore, succeeded in providing knowledge of the new routes connecting the two countries. Thus small routes passing through difficult terrain were rocked out through Gilgit, Yarkand etc. to facilitate the quick journey between Kashmir and the places falling on the Southern silk route. Out of the three land routes, the Southern most one was connected at Wakhan with the road which provided access to Kashmir along Gilgit and Yasin valley.<sup>18</sup> It was difficult, no doubt but remained popular among the Buddhists till the advent of Hunas.

Under the circumstances, there appears no justification in calling the Central Asian routes as Silk routes because of their connection with the Chinese silk. The Indian muslin was much more popular in Rome than the silk from China.<sup>19</sup> The Roman literature tells us that "Roman dames decked in seven folds of Indian muslin, paraded the streets and became such a menace to the city's morals that the Senate intervened and laid an embargo upon the import of that fine stuff from India."

Another factor, which also needs the attention of scholars in this regard, is the traditions and cultural nuclei of the important places of the so called Southern silk routes like Khotan and Kuchi. All such places were having flourishing Indian culture and their dynasties generally traced their descent from the ruling families of India.<sup>20</sup> Thus, the economy, culture and polity of the cities of Central Asia was Indian without any important Chinese context. Rather it were the monks of Kuchi who succeeded in making Buddhism a major religious institution in China though it was first introduced in the first century A.D.<sup>21</sup> The entire Central Asia, thus, not only became a centre of Indian culture but an agent for its spread in other areas also.

The later historians also talk mainly about the interaction between India, Greece and Rome. Nowhere we hear from them about the similarities between the ideas of Greece, Rome and China. Among such scholars Alberuni commands a very high position. His understanding of the civilization of India and Western Asia was par excellence and has been appreciated by all. He clearly

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17. Moti Chandra, *op.cit.*, pp. 180-81.

18. *Ibid.*

19. E.H.Warmington, *op.cit.*, pp.210-12.

20. R.C.Majumdar, *op.cit.*, pp. 639-45; Moti Chandra, *op.cit.*, p.177.

21. R.C.Majumdar, *op.cit.*, p. 647.

states that Scaethen Greeks and the Hindus think alike.<sup>22</sup> Thus we have nothing to prove that China had more trade than India, through Central Asian trade routes with Rome during the early centuries of Christian era when the said routes flourished most.

Under the circumstances there is no justification in calling the Central Asian trade routes as Silk routes. If one wants to christen it on the basis of the most prized commodity which was carried through it, one has to call it costus route(as it was costus) which was treated most valuable by the Romans and the Greeks. And if this be the case then the study of the so called silk route's economy by taking into consideration the aspects related to China and the territories through which they passed alone will not bring into light, data of much relevance.

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22. *Alberuni's India*, Edited by E.C.Sachau, Two Vols., S.Chand & Co, Delhi, 1964, Vol. I, p.24.

## SOCIAL GEOGRAPHY OF TRIBES IN JAMMU REGION IN ANCIENT TIMES

Mrinalini Atrey \*

The present paper is an attempt to map out the geographical distribution of different tribes in the region of Jammu<sup>1</sup> during ancient times.<sup>2</sup> Jammu has an antiquity that goes back to Indus days.<sup>3</sup> It was a part of the Vedic belt and as such some of the Vedic tribes may have also dwelt here. Madras, one of the Vedic tribes is often referred to in the local sources. There is also evidence of foreign tribes like Indo-Greeks, Sakas, Pahlavas, and Kushanas having lived here. In the Post Harsa era, the political fragmentation and constant warfare forced people of plains to seek shelter in hilly regions of the north. As a result many Rajput classes shifted to these areas and set up small Kingdoms by subduing local inhabitants.<sup>4</sup>

This shows that Jammu was a home of many tribes. The foremost among them is the Madras. Madra tribe is said to have dwelt in the region between the rivers Ravi and Jhelum<sup>5</sup> with its capital at (Sakal) Sialkot during Vedic times. Jammu was a part of Madra.desh. This becomes evident from the fact that Panini in his *Ashtadhyayi* refers to the division of Madras into Purva and Aparā Madra who dwelt in the region between Ravi and Chanab and Chanab and Jhelum respectively.<sup>6</sup> He also refers to further division of Madas into Savitriputrakah and Madrakarah on account of marriage of Madra princess Savitri with Salva Prince Satyavana. This division brought madrakarah group to Jammu and thus one of the section of Madra people made it as their place of activity.

Another evidence which further supports the above given statement, is a

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1. The region between river Ravi and river Jhelum south of Pir Panjal Hills.
2. Periodisation as applied at Pak-Indian level has been taken up here as well for convenience.
3. Harappan sites have been discovered at Manda in Akhnoor.
4. Jammu along with other Punjab Hill states is a pertinent example of this process.
5. Refer to map No. 1.
6. V.S. Aggarwal, *India As Known To Panini*, p.67.

legend regarding river Devika which flows through Jammu. It is said that this river was brought to the earth by Rishi Kashyap for the welfare of Madra people.<sup>7</sup> But during Alexander's invasion Madras do not figure anywhere in the accounts of Greek though Alexander fought many battles near and around Sakala. Infact his historians refer to two other tribes, Darva and Abhisaras. It is possible that Madra by this time may have had lost their Vedic significance. Later on when Sakala came under the control of alien tribes like Sakas, Pahlavas and Hunas, Madras continued to fight for Sakala. Perhaps from their strong hold at Jammu at least till the time of Emperor Samudragupta.<sup>8</sup> In course of their struggle for independence they moved to Amritsar. This may also explain the inclusion of Amritsar into Madradesh.

Two ancient tribes Darva and Abhisara also inhabited this region between Ravi and Chenab and Chanab and Jhelum respectively.<sup>9</sup> As a result the whole tract between Jhelum and Ravi came to be called Darva- Abhisara after them. The term dates back to pre-Alexander days as his historians refer to it. Alexander's historians refer to Abhisara, the king of this tract who made an alliance with him. Darva tribe on the other hand is mentioned in Markendya Purana<sup>10</sup> and Sabha Parva<sup>11</sup> of Mahabharata in connection with enumeration of other tribes. Now if we try to locate them, we find that it was present day Jammu and Billawar area for Darvas and Abhisaras occupied Poonchh, Rajouri and Bhimbar now popularly called Chibhal.<sup>12</sup>

Another important tribe of this region was the Audumbras. They inhabited the areas formed by the valley of the Beas or perhaps the wider region between the upper Satluj and and the Ravi.<sup>13</sup> The coins belonging to it have been found at Pathankot. On the basis of the testimony of *Ganapath* of Panini, the tribe can be placed as early as fifth century B.C. It must have asserted its independence and formed a separate state in about second century B.C. What happened to the Audumbras between the fifth and second century B.C. is at

7. 'सरिदरूप धृत्वा वृजिन नांश कुरू शिवम । - देविका लंहगी दीका जनांना माद्रागा ग्रह तनय विश्रापत मनसाम ।।  
पाण्डुलिपि श्लोक ४

8. J.F. Fleet, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. III, p.8.

9. Refer to map No. 2.

10. B.K. Sastri, *Duggar Ch Devika Nadi Da Sanskritika Mahatva*, Jammu, p.3

11. *Ibid*.

12. Refer to map No. 2.

13. Dr. Kalyan Kumar Dasgupta, *The Audumbras*, Sanskrit College, Calcutta, 1965, p.1; Refer to map No. 2.

present unknown. Historians of Jammu region like Dr Charak regard present day Domba ( low caste) being its descendents. However this fact needs further enquiry.

This region was also home to Takkas. Their kingdom lay between the Ravi and the Chenab i.e., to the north of the Jalandhar Kingdom.<sup>14</sup> According to Huien Tsang Sakher (Sialkot) was the capital of Takka country. *Jammu Annals* also tell us that a dynasty of Takka kings of Takshila ruled over here for some centuries. Moreover Shiv Noirmohi writes that this tribe still inhabits the western banks of Chenab in the Akhnoor region<sup>15</sup> and call themselves as Takkai.<sup>16</sup> He says that either Akhnoor region was a part of the Takka country or Takka people migrated to this place. Many historians regard present day Takkaras or Thakurs as descendents of Takka tribe. These are now spread over whole of Jammu region but their dominant localities are in the Shivaliks.

Gurjaras and Durgaras<sup>17</sup> (Dogras) are the other two tribes, which still form majority of the present population. They both appeared in the Shivalik hills simultaneously and it is possible that they either belonged to the same ethnic group or were atleast a part of the same wave of migration.<sup>18</sup> Durgara tribe inhabits the region situated between Ravi and Chenab to the south of the Pir Panjal.<sup>19</sup> As stated earlier, this was the region being inhabited by Madras and Darva Abhisara tribes as well.<sup>20</sup> What happened to them (Madras and Darva) is the question to be looked into. As regards to the Gurjaras, their diffusion and spread in this region is not known with certainty. They trace their descent to Gujrat and Rajputana. Their arrival is attributed to the outbreak of devastating droughts and famines in Rajasthan, Gujrat and Kathiawad. The archaeological evidences do prove that there was a spell of dryness in the 6th and 7th centuries in Rajasthan and Gujrat which led to outward migration of these people who along with their cattle entered the pastures of Shivaliks.

The great Khasa tribe which had established itself in the valleys of Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Garhwal, Kumaon and Nepal also dwelt here.

14. C.V. Vaidya, *History of Medieval Hindu India*, Vol.II, Delhi, 1979, p. 384; Refer to map No. 2.

15. Refer to map No. 3.

16. Shiv Nirmohi, *Duggar Ka Itihasa*, p.14.

17. The Land is known as *Dogra/Duggardesh* after them.

18. S.D.S. Charak, *Rise and Fall of Jammu Kingdom*, Pathankot, 1971, p.5.

19. Refer to map No.3.

20. Refer to maps No.1 and 2.

Their ancestral home was probably in Central Asia from where they branched off and took a different route for India. Here in Jammu region they were concentrated in Rajouri and Poonchh areas.<sup>21</sup> Infact both Rajapuri(Rajouri) and Lohar (Poonchh) states are said to have been founded by chiefs of Khasa tribe. The descendents of these tribes at the present day are probably the Khakhas of the lower Jhelum valley and the outer hills.

Kishtwar area of Jammu region was inhabited by three important tribes namely Rotar, Ganai and Panjsasi. Rotar and Ganai were foreign tribes who invaded the plateau from the neighbouring hills.<sup>22</sup> The Rotar founded the village of Ziora and the Ganais settled near the centre of the plateau. Both of these tribes are still represented in the population and rank as sub-divisions of the Thakur caste.<sup>23</sup> Ganais have mostly converted to Islam. Panjsasi appear to be trading community from Punjab.<sup>24</sup> some of its members settled down in the plateau area and mingled with the other tribes. They, however, frequently entered into struggle with Rotar and Ganai tribes and were able to subdue them. When Kahnsen conquered Kishtwar, it was being ruled by Panjsasis. A few families of Panjsasis are still living in Walrukundle Palmer Tund Kishtwar.<sup>25</sup>

Another tribe, which was scattered all over the region is Nagas. Some scholars regard them as the original inhabitants of this region, while others regard them as foreigners who came here under the leadership of Vasukai Naga. Whatever the debate, one thing is clear that Nagas did form a part of the population of this area in ancient times. They still reside in Nagot area of Reasi where they have twenty-two villages e.g. Sarandher, Khanser.<sup>26</sup> Presently, they all claim themselves to be Chandravansi Thakurs.<sup>27</sup> Their main concentration was earlier in Bhaderwaha region. Swami Haridas Tyagi has discovered many aspects of Naga culture at Chenani and Ramnagar tehsils also, which suggests that Naga culture prevailed almost in the whole of Duggar region.<sup>28</sup>

Kokkhars was also an important tribe, which inhabited in Jammu re-

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21. Refer to map No. 3.

22. Hutchinson and Vogel, *History Of Punjab Hill States*. Vol.II. Low Price Publications, Delhi, p. 641.

23. *Ibid.*

24. *Ibid.* p. 643.

25. D.C. Sharma, *History of Kishtwar*, p.28.

26. Shiv Nirmohi, *Duggar Ke Lok Devta*, p.14.

27. *Ibid.*

28. E.g. Kudd folk dance and trishul at Sudha Mahadev.

gion. There is a lot of controversy about their origin. But one thing is clear that they inhabited Jammu region with main concentration near Mangle area. Their first appearance was noticed in A.D. 1008 when they joined Anandpal against Mahmud of Ghazni.<sup>29</sup> Their importance was more because of their involvement in politics of their times.

However when we attempt to locate these tribes and try to analyse their position in the present day scenario we are faced with difficulty. Most of these tribes have lost their identity. Many among them have either migrated to new places or have got involved in the process of Sanskritisation. We have seen that the area initially inhabited by Madras was later on occupied by Darva-Abhisra who in turn were overtaken by the tribes like the Duggaras and Gurjaras.<sup>30</sup> The Abhisara area is now known as Chibhal.<sup>31</sup> This shows that the preceding tribes having failed to withstand invading tribes either migrated to new places or were obliterated. It was perhaps in course of their struggle that Madras were forced to move from Sakala to places like Amritsar. Today if we try to locate Madras, Darva-Abhisara, it is difficult, almost impossible. What we can do is, try to find their imprints in the present day population. As discussed earlier, we know that present day Takkais could be lost Takka tribe. In the same manner if research is under taken, it could help us in knowing the antecedents of other tribes as well.

Those tribes, which stayed on and faced the onslaught of the invaders, became part of Sanskritisation process. A pertinent example in this case is the Naga tribe. We find now they all claim to be Chandravansi Thakurs. This shows that they got Sanskritised in course of historical process. Further research would answer the questions as to when and under what circumstances it took place. Same could be said of Rotar and Ganai tribes. In case of Ganais, with the coming of Islamic influence they got islamised.

It was not only the process of Sanskritisation but de-Sanskritisation also did take place. The case of present day Meghs and Doods is an example. Many scholars regard them as original inhabitants of this place. Infact their physical features denote an Aryan origin <sup>32</sup>, but today they form the lowest rung of the society. It is possible that they could not protect themselves against the

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29. Kiran Sapru: " Khokhars Problem on North West Frontier During Sultanate Period;" M. Phil. Term Paper, Dept. Of History, University of Jammu.

30. Refer to map No. 2 and 3.

31. Refer to map No.3.

32. *India Census Report*. 1911. Chapter Caste System. p.203.

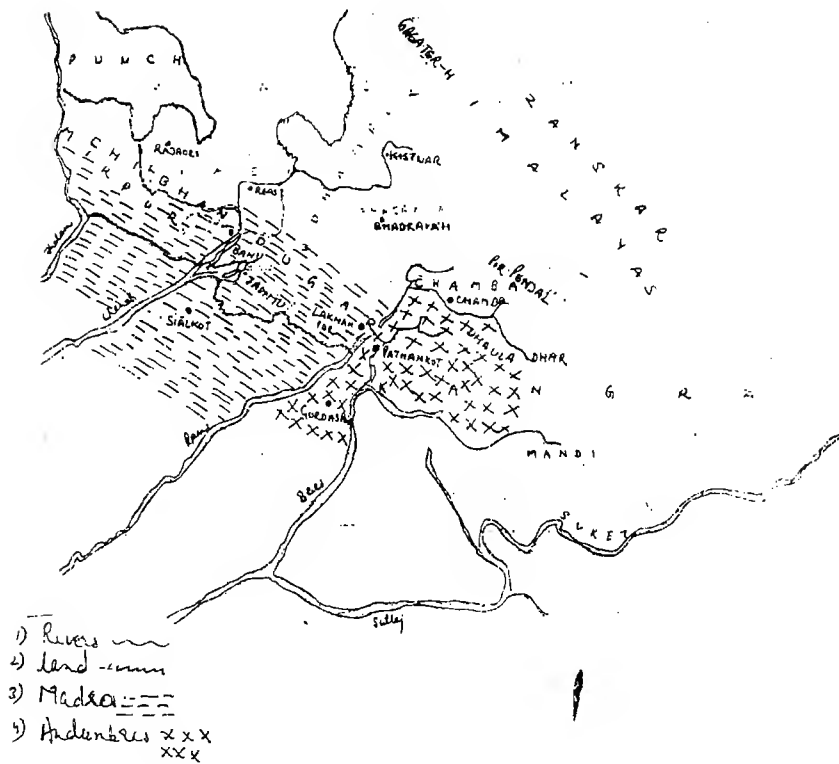
onslaught of the superior migrating people. As a result they were reduced to the lowest status. In Bhaderwaha many Megh families call themselves as Nagas.<sup>33</sup> It is quite possible that some of them may have been originally Nagas.

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33. Shiv Nirmohi, *op.cit.*, p.64.

Note : Maps have been prepared with the help of *A Historical Atlas of South Asia*, edited by Joseph & Schwartzerg and Maps provided in *History Of Punjab Hill States* by J. Hutchinson and J. Ph. Vogel.

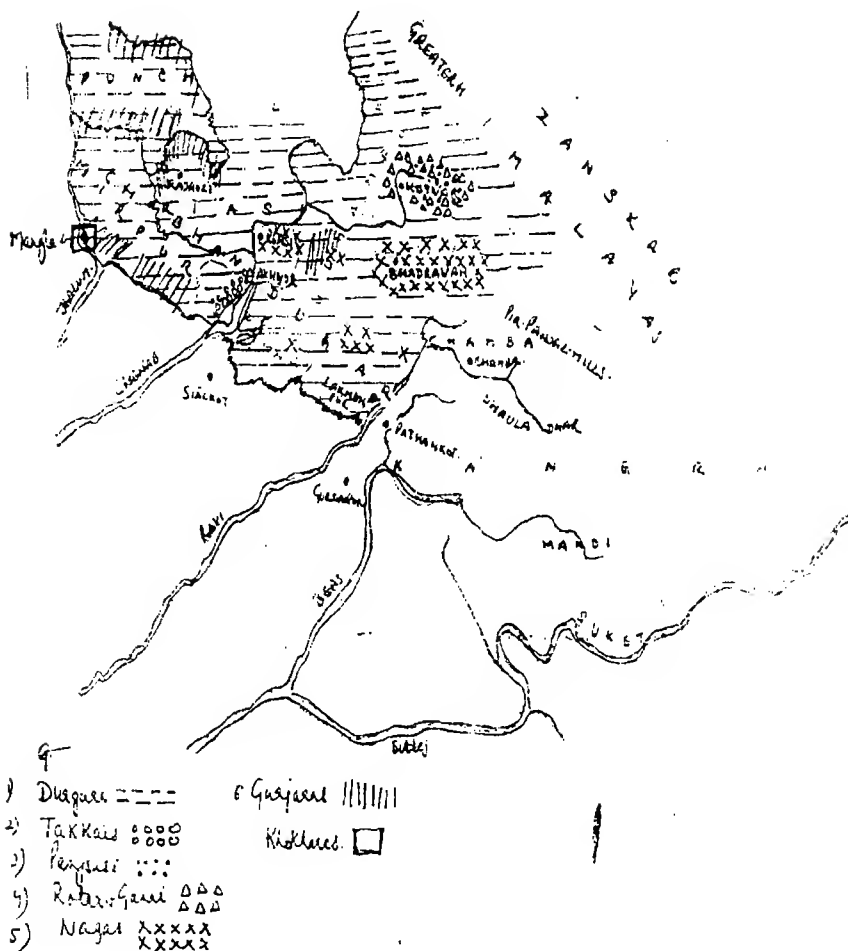
## Jammu Region in Vedic Age



A hand-drawn map of the Chamba region in Himachal Pradesh, India. The map shows the Chamba district, including the Chamba city, the Chamba River, and the surrounding areas. Key features include the Chamba district, the Chamba River, the Chamba city, the Chamba district, the Chamba River, and the Chamba city. The map is labeled with 'CHAMBA', 'CHAMBA RIVER', 'CHAMBA CITY', 'CHAMBA DISTRICT', 'CHAMBA RIVER', and 'CHAMBA CITY'.

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# Jammu Region in Post Harsa Era



## MARGINALS IN REVOLT: TURKBACHAS OF EASTERN PUNJAB, c.1380-1433

Nishat Manzar \*

Timur's invasion (AD 1398-99) shattered the Delhi Sultanate, and his departure left the areas around Delhi and Punjab desolate. Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmud had already fled to Gujarat, hence to Malwa and finally stayed at Kannauj till 1405. Powerful nobles, who were left behind got an opportunity to assert their authority in different territories – *wilayats*, *shiqs* and *iqtas*. While the *hakims* of important regions like Gujarat, Malwa and Jaunpur declared their independence, Khizr Khan amir of Multan set his claim over Delhi.<sup>1</sup> Nobles who had been appointed in smaller *iqtas* also started behaving in an independent manner. Sultan had lost control over his nobles, or, he was at their mercy rather.

Mallu Iqbal Khan, who was a renowned noble<sup>2</sup> gained control over the state affairs at Delhi as *Zabit* (commander/chief/superior), soon after Timur's departure<sup>3</sup>. He took upon himself the responsibility of bringing nobles of Delhi under control. First, he paid attention to the areas adjacent to Delhi. He carried out expeditions in the direction of Mewat, Bayana, Etawah, Gwalior, Katehar, etc. but his prime objective was to crush the increasing power of Khizr Khan, *wali* or *amir* of Multan who was looking for an opportunity to usurp power at Delhi. Thus Punjab became a battleground for rival forces, where *iqta* holders of different areas were being forced to obey either the Sultan of Delhi (or nobles fighting on his behalf) or Khizr Khan. *Iqtas* of various nobles were also being

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1. On hearing Timur's march various nobles, defeated or frightened, gathered in Mewat, Doab and other parts of the Sultanate. Khizr Khan, who had paid homage to Timur, being a Saiyyid was assigned the Sultanate of Delhi. At another place, he is mentioned to have been assigned the *iqtas* of Multan and Dipalpur only. Hidayat Hussain M.(ed.), *Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi*, Calcutta, 1931. pp.166-67.
2. Mallu Iqbal Khan was a slave of Firoz Shah. He rose to prominence during the reign of Sultan Muhammad, son of Firoz Shah'.
3. Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmud was still in Kannauj.

shuffled frequently, though most of them had become hereditary, from Firoz Shah's period onwards.<sup>4</sup>

Like many other territories around Delhi which had gone out of control, Samana is also frequently mentioned in the contemporary sources. This *iqta* had always been placed under one of the most capable nobles right from the days of the Early Turkish Sultans.<sup>5</sup> Its importance was due to its proximity to Delhi, and served as the last check-post in Punjab on way to the capital. Keeping in view the Mongol menace, competent commanders were appointed in this *iqta*. Khaljis and Tughlaqs (Jalaluddin and Ghayasuddin) rendered valuable services as in charge of Samana. Other *iqtas* of importance were Sunam and Sirhind, all of them lying in East Punjab.

In the 1st years of Firoz Shah's reign, a family and a group known as Turkbachas (sons of Turkish slaves) rose into prominence, first in Samana and then extended their control upto Sirhind, Sunam, Jalandhar, Ludhiana etc. They kept on shifting their allegiance from Khizr Khan to the nobles sent by the Sultans (or armies under the command of the Sultan himself) of Delhi. When Khizr Khan assumed authority as the first Saiyid Sultan of Delhi, these Turkbachas were hard pressed to vacate these *iqtas*. Samana was taken from them and they were compensated with a smaller *iqta* of Sirhind. They rebelled many times and invited even the Naib of Kabul—Sheikh Ali as well as Sheikha and Jusrath Khokhar from Sialkot to help them against the forces sent from Delhi. They enjoyed the support of local chiefs as well. Their last rebellion is recorded in 1430 during Mubarak Shah's period and continued for long three years. The problem came to an end with the death of the leader of Turkbachas—Faulad Turkbacha in 1433. By that time entire region, stretching from eastern Punjab to Lahore was left desolate by the forces of Sheikh Ali, Jusrath Khokhar and Turkbachas.

In this paper a detailed discussion on the lineage, rise and final subjugation

4. Since the death of Tatar Khan, a senior noble of Firoz Shah, not only his post and *iqta* was assigned to his sons, but almost all the descendents of the deceased nobles received the same favours.
5. Aibak was entrusted Kuhram and Samana by Muizuddin Muhammad bin Sam. Balban had put Sunam and Samana under his second son Bughra Khan, later divided the two and assigned Samana to Prince Muhammad to check the Mongol danger in addition of Sind. It was perhaps after the death of Prince Muhammad, Malik Firoz (Jalaluddin) Khalji was given the charge of Samana. Alauddin appointed his favourite nobles Zafar Khan and then Malik Nayak in Sunam ; and Malik Yak Lakhi in Samana. Tughlaqs rose into prominence from Samana itself.

tion of Turkbachas has been made. A map is also appended to the end of this paper depicting the *iqtas* under the control of Turkbachas and routes taken by Sheikh Ali of Kabul and Sheikhha and Jasrath Khokhar of Sialkot to plunder Punjab. Lastly, some conclusions have been drawn about the entire discussion, i.e. how the rebellion of Turkbachas can be placed in the political scenario of the fifteenth century.

Rise of Turkbachas in Samana, Sirhind, Sunam and Jalandhar is associated with Firoz Shah's policy of enrolling large number of slaves in his service. Shams Siraj Afif informs that some of them were appointed on administrative posts and others got *iqtas* in different parts of the kingdom. Many of them got stipends fixed in their name, while others employed in the Karkhanas. A large number of them devoted themselves to the study of different *ulum*. A separate department was established to look after the welfare of the slaves. In the imperial household, almost all the important porters were filled by the slaves trained in the specific field. There was no place left where these slaves were not assigned a job. When their number increased, the Sultan sent many of them to the regions of Multan, Samana, Dipalpur, Gujarat etc. Gradually they established control over every department and frequently interfered in the state affairs. In Samana they gradually consolidated their position, in the subsequent period played havoc, and adopted a rebellious attitude towards the Sultan of Delhi.<sup>6</sup>

During the closing years of Firoz Shah's reign Malik Qubul Quran Khwan-Sultani is mentioned as *muqta* of Samana. He was a slave of the Sultan as the word Sultani (meaning a slave of the Sultan) is suffixed to his name, which clearly suggests his position. He had served on important posts like *sar-i pardahdar-i Khas* (highest officer in-charge of the royal tents) and *amir-i-majlis-i-Khas* (in charge of the Privy Council). By year 1379-80, he is found trying to assert his authority in Samana, as Firoz Shah on his way to Sirmur hills to subdue the hill chiefs, had also received huge offerings (*Khidmatha-i bisyar*) from Malik Qubul and showed his favours to the latter.<sup>7</sup> What is noteworthy, that he was sent to Samana to check Mongol invasion in 1358 who had invaded the environs of Dipalpur. Since then he is recognized as the *muqta* of Samana. But soon after his allegedly rebellious attitude, he was transferred to the *iqta* of Badaun in 1380-81. Under Firoz Shah's successor Tughlaq Shah (A.D. 1388-89), Ghalib Khan son of Malik Qubul is mentioned as the *muqta* or *amir* of Samana and included in the list of those *amirs* holding control over neighboring

6. Shams Siraj Afif, *Tarikh-i Firoz Shahi*, tr. M. Fida Ali, p. 189.

7. Yahya Sirhindi, *Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi*, p. 134.

territories. He was a supporter of Muhammad Shah (bin Firoz Shah) who thrice became the Sultan of Delhi (1388-94). He was once removed from Samana on this ground (i.e. support he extended to Muhammad Shah) by Firoz Shah and sent to Bihar.<sup>8</sup> But his supporters killed the noble appointed by the Sultan in Samana and Ghalib Khan was soon back to his erstwhile *iqta* supporting the cause of Muhammad Shah who had been living in exile in Sirmur Hills.<sup>9</sup> Ghalib Khan also enjoyed the support of local aristocracy. It is evident from the incident when Muhammad Shah had met with reverses and sent from *Doab* his son Humayun Khan to seek help from Ghalib Khan and through him rally forces from that quarter. Ghalib Khan helped him by sending two loyal supporters of his reign—Rai Kamaluddin Main of Talwandi and Rai Zuljain Bhatti of Bhatnir. In spite of so many supporters, Muhammad Shah's attempt was repulsed. Here we come across a very significant point that now a prince or a Sultan could not rally forces or support in a region without the cooperation of local nobles (rather hereditary nobles) or chiefs. Finally he came out successful with the support of Turkish slaves of Firoz Shah, along with many others including Ghalib Khan.<sup>10</sup> Nasiruddin Mahmud failed to seek any help of Turkish party and hence of Ghalib Khan. The obvious reason was that some slaves of the late Sultan (Firoz Shah) such as Mallu Iqbal, Muqarrab Khan and Sadat Khan had gained control over almost all the important posts. Turkish party got disheartened and Ghalib Khan along with Rai Kamaluddin of Talwandi left the city quietly and encamped at Jawarbagh. They wanted to proceed to their *iqtas* without an audience with the new Sultan. They were brought back by the Wazir Khwaja Jahan to pay homage. This act was considered as the support of the nobles.<sup>11</sup> For the next few years we do not hear of Ghalib Khan's activities.

The events at Delhi encouraged local aristocracy as far as Sialkot region, to lay hands on imperial territory. In 1393 Khokhar chief Sheikha<sup>12</sup>

8. For the same offence, Sultan even was killed his own son-in-law. *Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi*, p. 140.

9. In place of Ghalib Khan, Malik Sultan Shah Kushdil was given the charge of Samana. In 1389 *Amiran-i sadah* of Samana slew him and sent his head to Muhammad, son of Firoz Shah, living in exile. *Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi*, pp. 146-47.

10. A number of slaves of Firoz Shah had already been settled in Samana, Multan and Dipalpur. At the court of Delhi, they were still very powerful. Bihamad Khani records their rebellions on many occasions. *Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi*, tr. M. Zaki, 1971, pp. 27, 29, 32-35.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

12. He was controlling a vast territory in Sialkot area.

ravaged the environs of Lahore and captured it Sarang Khan and Prince Humayun were sent by Muhammad Shah. Prince returned as soon as the news of death of the Sultan reached him, but Sarang Khan took the charge of *iqta* of Divalpur. Sheikhha Khokhar dared past of Divalpur and reached Ajodhan. Though he was defeated by Sarang Khan but before crossing over to his territory he had already devastated a large territory.<sup>13</sup> Sarang Khan soon established himself and ousted Khizr Khan from Multan, raided Samana and forced Ghalib Khan to vacate the fort. He joined Tatar Khan (bin Wajihul Mulk Zafar Khan of Gujarat) who was the *vizir* of Nusrat Shah (rival Sultan of Firozabad other than Nasiruddin Mahamud at Delhi) at Panipat. He recovered Samana with the help of Tatar Khan and Malik Almas—Commander of slaves (*uhdedar-i bandagandra*) with ten elephants and a small army, sent to Tatar Khan.<sup>14</sup> In 1397 another disastrous event was in waiting. Pir Mohammad, grandson of Timur captured Uchch and Multan while Tirmur closely, followed him. When he encamped at Samana (via Divalpur, Ajodhan and Bhatnir), Ghalib Khan had already vacated it.

When Timur departed from north India, most of the *iqta* holders were back to their *iqtas*, so was Ghalib Khan. He was not at cordial terms with his son-in-law Taghi Khan Turkbacha Sultani, and when Taghi attacked Multan in 1400-1401, Ghalib Khan killed him and his supporters.<sup>15</sup> The word Sultani indicates his status as being the slave of the Sultan (Firoz Shah). Henceforth 'Turkbachas' came to be used as a suffix to their names in a rather derogatory manner.<sup>16</sup> When Mallu Iqbal Khan attempted to extend his power upto Multan and combated with the forces of Khizr Khan, Ghalib Khan of Samana was dead and Bahram Khan Turkbacha was *amir* of this *iqta*. The old time supporters of Turkbachas were the chiefs of Bhatnir—Rai Hinu (son of Julijain) and Rai Firoz son of Kamaluddin of Talwandi. They all were captured deceitfully. Bahram, perhaps being a threat of Mallu Iqbal or he being a good terms with Khizr Khan, was skinned alive. Mallu Iqbal himself died fighting the forces of Khizr Khan and Samana passed onto Bairam Khan Turkbacha.<sup>17</sup>

Bairam Khan promised fealty to Khizr Khan. When the throne of Delhi was restored to Nasiruddin Mahmud in 1405, one of his nobles Daulat Khan

13. *Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi*, pp. 167-68.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 176.

16. Yahya writing history of his patrons Khizr Khan and Mubarak Shah denounces them in this way.

The word Turk also used to denote a rascal, barbarian, or a plunderer.

17. *Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi*, pp. 173-74.

(who later assumed royalty) attacked Bairam Khan. Khizr Khan apparently came to his rescue, but his prime objective, perhaps, was to restrict the growing power of any noble and interference in the affairs of Punjab which was the only region left for those aspirant to the throne of Delhi. He had very cautiously planned to consolidate his position in Punjab. For this purpose he had to tackle the Turkbachas (and many slave officers of erstwhile regime, many of whom had retired to Samana and other parts of Punjab) tactfully, since they formed, by now, the most influential power group in Punjab. He could not risk an interception on the part of Turkbachas on his march towards Delhi. It is not clear from the available information on what ground of Khizr Khan took away Samana and Sunam from Bairam Khan. Perhaps it was in turn of the help he (Khizr Khan) had extended to Bairam Khan in ousting Daulat Khan from Punjab. He very intelligently compensated Bairam Khan Turkbacha with the *iqta* of Sirhind<sup>18</sup> and some other *parganas*. This was not what Bairam Khan had bargained for. He resisted this arrangement, and disappointed, joined his enemy Daulat Khan (1409-10). Khizr Khan immediately marched out towards Sirhind and forced the rebel to bow before him. Now enmity grew between Turkbachas and the Saiyyid Sultans. It resulted in a series of rebellions for more than a quarter of a century.

Khizr Khan became the Sultan of Delhi in 1412 and Bairam Khan died in 1415-16. These three years we do not hear Khizr Khan coercing Bairam Khan. Only after his death, the Sultan assigned all the *iqtas* of Bairam Khan to Prince Mubarak. He in turn appointed Malik Sadhu Nadira as his *naib*. Samana remained under Majlis-e-Ali Zirk Khan. Turkbachas of Bairam Khan's tribe killed Malik Sadhu Nadira and captured Sirhind.<sup>19</sup> They could not be subdued since they retired to the hills across Sutlej. Next year (1417-18) they found their new leader in Tughan Rais. They were subdued and Tughan was forced to expel the murderers of Malik Sadhu Nadira and handover his son as hostage. Soon he was deprived of Sirhind, which was assigned to Malik Sultan Shah Lodi. In the subsequent year (1419) another insurrection rocked Punjab lead by a swindler Sarang Khan. They all gathered at Rupar. Initially Tughan Rais cooperated with Malik Sultan Shah Lodi in the capacity of *muqta* of Jalandhar, which is quite strange. Possibly, because of the grave situation, his occupation

18. Sunam appears for the first time with Samana. *Ibid.*, pp. 176-79.

19. *Ibid.* Sirhind lies on Northern side of Samana. It means Khizr Khan wanted to keep him away northward. Nizamuddin. *Tbaqat-i-Akbari*, p. 132; Badauni. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, Vol. I, pp. 276-77.

of Jalandhar was recognized or to keep him away from the said Sarang Khan he might have been granted this favour. Further developments show Tughan Rais trying to establish himself in the east Punjab. For the sake of money he joined Sarang Khan (the swindler) who was possessing a large quantity of jewels. Immediately after joining him, Tughan killed him and again rose into rebellion (1420). Zirak Khan was once again appointed to the job of suppressing Tughan along with Malik Khairuddin from Delhi. Hard-pressed Tughan crossed over to the territory of Khokhars and his *iqta* of Jalandhar was added to the *shiq* of Samana under Zirak Khan.<sup>20</sup>

With the death of Khizr Khan in 1421, Punjab again turned into a battleground for ambitious chiefs, especially Turkbachas, Khokhars and Sheikh Ali-Naib of Kabul. On occasions, Jasrath Khokhar and Sheikh Ali extended their help to the Turkbachas, or independently lead expeditions into Punjab. Jasrath, son of Sheikhha was an ambitious man and was controlling Sialkot. He had extended his influence upto Kashmir and Lahore. He had even dared oppose Timur between Tulumba and Dipalpur, participated in the succession crisis in Kashmir which led to the coronation of Sultan Zainul Abidin in 1420. He had even cherished dream of the throne of Delhi.<sup>21</sup> Within a span of eleven years (1421-32), he led six campaigns into Punjab plundering almost all the important *iqtas*, *Shiqs* and *wilayats* of Punjab as far as Talwandi, Ludhiana, Rupar, Jalandhar, Tilhar, Bajwara, Lahore, Kalanaur, Jammu, Dipalpur, etc.<sup>22</sup> On various occasions, he inflicted defeat on the armies sent by Mubarak Shah (1421-34) and left a vast tract east of Sutlej devastated.

Jasrath Khokhar's first insurrection was to help Tughan Rais Turkbacha. As a result of a treaty between him and Zirak Khan—*muqta* of Samana, he came out successful installing Tughan in Jalandhar and himself agreed to pay *Khidmati* to the Sultan. Later he went back upon his words, imprisoned Zirak Khan when the latter was vacating the fort of Jalandhar, besieged Sultan Shah Lodi in Sirhind. Hearing Mubarak Shah's approach, he made a hasty retreat. In his second campaign, Jasrath besieged Lahore but faced a defeat. Reinforcement from different directions<sup>23</sup> forced him make a retreat. In his third campaign, Jasrath defeated and killed Rai Bhim of Jammu, a loyal supporter of Mubarak Shah. He

20. *Turkbachagan-e Khail-e Bairam Khan. Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi*, p.186.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 191-92.

22. He must have been watching all the developments from Delhi carefully.

23. Jasrath led five expeditions in Punjab. He either captured or tried to capture these forts, though temporarily.

even entered into an alliance with Sheikh Ali of Kabul and plundered Lahore and Dipalpur. Sheikh Ali also marched towards Siwistan. In 1428, Jusrath emerged for the fourth time from his territory and besieged Kalanaur. Though Lahore was assigned to Malik Sikandar Tohfa, Jusrath defeated him and reached into the heart of Punjab. He plundered Jalandhar and Kalanaur. Sikandar Tohfa revived his strength and forced Jusrath to make a retreat. He still remained a potential danger to the Sultan and his nobles appointed in Punjab.

Political scenario in Punjab once again changed when in 1430 a powerful noble of Khizr Khan and Mubarak Shah, Saiyyid Salim of Baraha died.<sup>24</sup> He had accumulated huge wealth. Though much of his *iqtas* were resumed, some *parganas* were assigned to his sons.<sup>25</sup> But the wealth, the deceased noble had amassed, fell into the hands of one of his slaves, Faulad Turkbacha. He was rather instigated by the sons of Saiyyid Salim who were deprived of much of the assignments of their father. Although they were captured, Faulad Turkbacha managed to hold the treasures of his master as well as increase his wealth by way of plundering raids around Tabarhinda (Bathinda, a fort which he had taken control of). At the first instance no aggressive plan of action was made, but a noble Malik Yusuf Sarwar and a local chief Rai Hinu Bhatti of Bhatnir was sent to lure him. Here not the agents of the Sultan, but Faulad Turkbacha dictated the terms. The following day he made a sortie, defeated imperial forces and 'scattered them like drops.'<sup>26</sup> He looted the entire baggage, tents, cash and goods they possessed. Mubarak Shah himself reached Sarsuti (Sirsa) and consulted his *amirs* and *Maliks* who had joined him there. On the other hand Faulad made vast preparations and gathering strength and reinforcements fortified himself in the fort of Tabarhinda. Again Faulad dictated the terms saying that he had faith in Imadul Mulk—the amir of Multan and through his mediation only he would submit. Sultan called Imadul Mulk, but Faulad

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24. Rai Bhim of Jammu, Malik Sikandar Tohfa from Delhi, Malik Rajab from Dipalpur, Sultan Shah I.odi from Sirhind, Rai Firoz Main, son of Kamaluddin Main of Talwandi, etc. assisted in this venture. *Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi*, pp.195-99.

25. This is the first reference of Saiyyids of Baraha. He was one of the favourite nobles of Khizr Khan, who was assigned the *iqta* of Saharanpur in 1414. He had rendered valuable services in the conflict against Sharqi Sultan Ibrahim. He had received additional *iqtas* of Tabrahinda, Sarsuti and Anroha. He died while accompanying Sultan Mubarak Shah back from the expedition in Etawah region. *Ibid.*, pp. 183, 214-15.

26. Saiyyid Khan and Shujaul Mulk.

once more became suspicious and offered resistance for six months. It is astonishing that while the Sultan was around, Faulad sent his servants to Sheikh Ali Mughal at Kabul soliciting his assistance in turn for ready money. On the other hand, almost all the important nobles along with the Sultan were watching these developments meekly.<sup>27</sup> Only when Sheikh Ali reached with a huge army of his and Khokhars just ten *Kuroh* from Tabarhinda, the nobles raised the siege and retired to their own houses. Faulad paid the stipulated sum of two lacks of *tankas*. When he retreated, Sultan's men claimed victory over him.

In the same year (1431), merely after a gap of six months, Jasrath Khokhar fell upon Jalandhar. Malik Sikandar Tohfa holder of the *Iqta* of Lahore, who was besieging Jalandhar was unaware of his arrival. At first onset, Jasrath captured Malik Tohfa and then besieged Samana. Almost simultaneously, Sheikh Ali ravaged the environs of Multan. He reached Tulumba, razed all the houses to ground and captured the entire population of the "Muslims". Faulad's courage had also increased tremendously and he devastated the country of Rai Firoz Main (whose father had been an ally of Turkbachas), killed him and looted all his belongings. Within two months (Jan.—Feb. 1432 AD) Sultan Mubarak Shah himself set out for Multan and Lahore. He sent Malik Yusuf Sarwar with advance guard. Jasrath raised the siege of Samana carrying with him Sikandar Tohfa) and Sheikh Ali retreated to Bartot. Jasrath reappeared in the same year (July/Aug. 1432) and laid the siege of Lahore, but Nusrat Khan newly appointed *muqta* of Lahore drove him back. Next year (1433) Sheikh Ali again appeared in Punjab, captured Lahore and besieged Dipalpur. On the arrival of the Sultan, he retreated. Sultan assigned Lahore and Jalandhar to Imadul Mulk. In the same year, i.e. A.D. 1433, Faulad again stirred insurrection in Tabarhinda. He very tactfully defended the pressure of the imperial army. Sultan along with many others reached Tabarhinda. Malik Allahabad Kalu Lodi, who had recently been given charge of Lahore and Jalandhar, forced Jasrath raise the siege of Jalandhar.<sup>28</sup> In the same year Faulad Turkbacha died and the Sultan got rid of at least, one of his enemies. We do not hear of Jasrath or Sheikh Ali anymore either. Mubarak Shah himself went in that direction to settle the affairs on the pretext of hunting expedition.

From the above description, we may draw some significant conclusions.

27. *Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi*, pp.215-21.

28. Malik Yusuf Sarwar, Rai Ilinu, Malik Kalu, Kamil Khan, Islam Khan, etc. Last three were besieging Tabarhinda fort.

It was the policy of Firoz Shah of enrolling large number of slaves into his service, which in subsequent period lead to the rise of Turkbachas in Eastern Punjab. These slaves concentrated in certain pockets in Punjab like Samana, Dipalpur and Multan, as they were settled in these *Iqtas* by the Sultan himself. At the imperial court as well, they began to dominate the state affairs. These slaves/slave officers had close links with those nobles living outside Delhi. They participated very actively in succession crisis, so Ghalib Khan of Samana who openly took the cause of Muhammad Shah Bin Firoz Shah. Subsequently he took help of Nusrat Shah, a grandson of Firoz Shah to get himself restored in Samana when he was ousted by Sarang Khan – the *muqta* of Dipalpur. Their strength had increased due to the expulsion of Turkish slaves from the court of Delhi by Sultan Muhammad Shah (bin Firoz Shah) due to their undue interference in the court affairs.

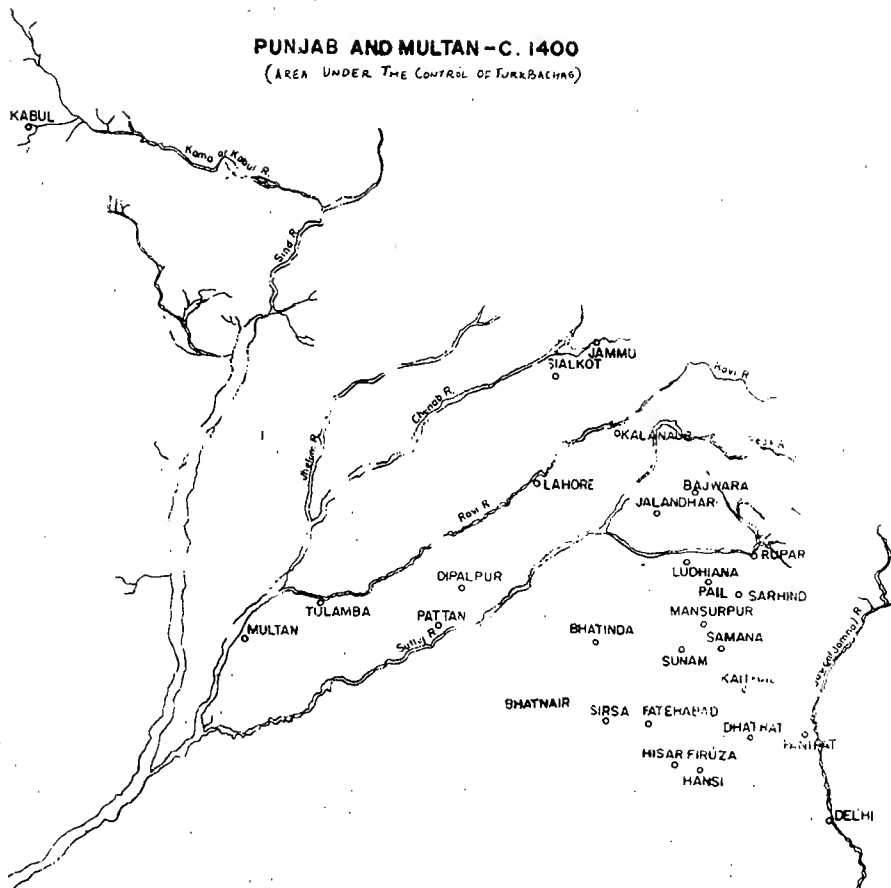
The cognomen, "Turkbacha" came to be attached to their names, especially in the context of the slaves living in Samana region (including Sirhind and Sunam) is a later development. This derogatory term was specifically used for the adversaries of Saiyyid rulers, by Yahya Sirhindi who was patronized by them. The rebellious attitude of Turkbachas remained a grave problem for more than four decades. On occasions, Faulad Turkbacha dictated term of peace, and sent provisions to Sultan's forces. While he was surrounded from all sides in Tabarhinda, he managed to send his servants to Sheikh Ali of Kabul. Keeping in mind the distance of Kabul from Tabarhinda on the one hand and Delhi on the other, it is astonishing that in spite of the fact that Sultan Mubarak Shah himself was staying at Panipat and was accompanied by the nobles from "all quarters" of Delhi and Punjab, could not help it. Sheikh Ali's march could not be intercepted though Lahore was under one of the nobles appointed by the Sultan himself. He remained busy discussing the situation with the nobles, while enemy was round the corner. They rather raised the siege.<sup>29</sup>

Initially Turkbachas had their allies in the Bhattis of Bhatnir and their Muslim clansmen Rai Kamaluddin and his son Firoz Main, they by now had been won over by the Sultan of Delhi. In spite of that, Turkbachas easily sustained the pressure of the imperial army. Faulad raided Rai Firoz's territory while the imperial army was roaming in the same territory. Their communication line was so weak that Jusrath, Sheikh Ali and Turkbachas many times surprised them.

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29. *Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi*, pp.223-25.

Lastly, the policy of frequent transfers of the nobles in Punjab, encouraged the Turkbachas to take advantage of the chaos that prevailed. Apart from Khokhars and the Governor of Kabul, Turkbachas formed the most powerful group in eastern Punjab, till the death of their last leader in 1433 AD. It was only after the fall of Turkbachas, Afghans, especially Lodis build up pressure group in the region, and emerged powerful in the subsequent period.



## **BAHU-FORT— EMERGENCE OF THE DUGGARS OF JAMMU REGION**

Poonam Chaudhary \*

1.1 Forts since ancient times have constituted an important aspect of military defence. As per the theory of *Saptanga* (Seven elements of the state), fort was an important element of the state without which a state could not hope to survive. Therefore, no one was prepared to accept the existence of a kingdom without a fort and *Duggar Desa* (Jammu region) was no exception to this rule. Moreover according to a popular tradition the word *Duggar* has been derived from the word *Durgara* which was used to denote, perhaps the people who lived in *Durgas* (Forts).<sup>1</sup>

1.2 The known accounts of the region tell that Jammu region was divided into twenty two petty states and each state had a fort of its own.<sup>2</sup> They however came into existence after 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D. when ambitious Rajputras started entering the hilly terrains and foreign tracts with the intention to create small principalities either because of their defeat at the hands of foreign invaders or because of family feuds. Under such circumstances, the founders of the twenty two states got forts built at the very beginning of their coming to power for the purpose of defence. Bahu is one such phenomenon. The fort and the town of Bahu lies to the east of Jammu Town and is situated on a secluded hillock on the left bank of river Tawi. the northern and the western sides were provided protection by the steep banks of river Tawi which were covered by dense forest. The eastern and the southern sides were protected by a ditch about 35 feet and 20 feet deep respectively. Bahu, therefore, from the economic and political point of view was relatively, a suitable place of defence because beyond Sialkot towards Lahore there was a dense forest and the only way to expand was towards Jammu. Thus, Bahu was an ideal location for the Rajputras to construct a fort as well as to make it their capital. Ancient traditions record that Bahu was the original

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1. G.A. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol. IX, Pt. Motilal, Delhi. 1967, p. 637,
2. A. Cunningham, *The Ancient Geography of India*. The Buddhist Period-I, including the campaigns of Alexander and the travels of Hieun Tsang. Indological Book House, Varanasi, 1963.

capital of Jammu region.

1.3 The history of the place is known to us from the *Vamsavalis* contained in the writings of Diwan Kirparam, Kahn Singh Bulauria, Narsingh Das Nargis, SDS Charak etc. They tell us that the area of Bahu was founded by Raja Bahu Lochan and that he was responsible for the construction of the fort of Bahu.<sup>3</sup> Such traditions, however, carry Bahu Lochan to remote antiquity. According to SDS charak, Bahu Lochan belonged to the twenty eighth generation of Lord Rama, who ruled in *treta yuga*<sup>4</sup> So, Bahu Lochan should be placed in the *dvapra yuga*. Under the circumstances, he is to be placed before *parikshit* whose rule marks the beginning of present *Kaliyuga*. The same scholar, on the basis of the number of rulers, mentioned in *Vamsavalis*, places Bahu Lochan in 2500 B.C.<sup>5</sup> This appears to be a contradiction according to the author's own calculation. For, at one place he says that Bahu Lochan, the elder brother of Jambu Lochan belongs to *Pre Kaliyuga* era and on the other hand he places Jambu Lochan in about 2500 B.C.<sup>6</sup> The gap between two real brothers cannot be taken beyond reasonable number of years.

1.4 In this context, it may be noted that the account of *Vamsavalis* is altogether unreliable as most of them were compiled in later years. Therefore, they do not tally with the list given in the *puranas*. As a result of this, the *Puranic* list of the rulers belonging to the time of Lord Rama differs from those which are mentioned in the *Vamsavalis* of Jammu Region. Further, the earliest reference to the people of Jammu in the form of *Durgara/Duggar* is available to us from an inscription of early medieval period.<sup>7</sup> Under the circumstances, as suggested by Hutchison and Vogel, we have to accept that most of the dynasties of the region were founded after 800 A.D. and later on the family bards worked out genealogies connecting their patrons with the heroes of the Epic days. The traditions in *Vamsavalis* too support our contention. Thus, what ap-

3. Kahn Singh Balauria, *Twarikh-Rajghan-I- Jammu-va-Kashmir*, Lahore. 1986, Vikrami. part I; Narsingh Das Nargis. *Twarikh Dogra Desh* (Jammu-va-Kashmir), Jammu 1967; SDS Charak, *A Short History of Jammu, Region -From Earliest times to 1846 A.D.*, Jammu. 1985.

4. S.D.S Charak, *op.cit.* p.3.

5. *Ibid.* p.35.

6. *Ibid.* See also Kirparam, *Gulab Nama . history of Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu & Kashmir*. English Translation by S.D.S. Charak, Jammu, 1977. fn. 6, p. 24.

7. J.Hutchison and J.Ph.Vogel, *History of Punjab Hill States*. Department of Languages and Culture. Himachal Pradesh, 1982, Volume II, p.46. The word *Durgara or Duggar* finds mention in 2 copper plate title deeds from Chamba, while referring to the events happened in the 10th century A.D.

pears possible is that when old traditions were forgotten, *Vamsavalis* were created. In light of this, we would like to place Bahu Lochan sometime after 800 A.D. and before 1200 A.D. as Kalhana too mentions the names of certain rulers of Jammu region in the twelfth century A.D. without mentioning the name of Bahu Lochan. This is further supported from the tradition which tells about the war between the Raja of Punjab (Sialkot) Chandrahans and Bahu Lochan.<sup>8</sup> sakala (Sialkot) came into prominence during the period of *rishi* Sakala, who systematised the *Rigveda*, which according to most scholars was done sometime between 1500 B.C. and 1200 B.C.<sup>9</sup> This way too we cannot place Bahu Lochan in 2500 B.C.

1.5 The political achievements of Bahu Lochan are shrouded in mystery. The only thing we learn is that Bahu Lochan entered Jammu from Kathua founded Bahu Nagar and established his capital at Bahu, on the left bank of river Tawi.<sup>10</sup> According to the local chronicles, Bahu was also known as Dhara Nagri.<sup>11</sup> The word *Dhara* means stream of water as also the edge of a mountain.<sup>12</sup> As the fort of Bahu is situated on a hillock by the bank of river Tawi, so Dhara Nagri could have been another name of the region. Bahu Lochan then perhaps, tried to extend his kingdom towards Sakala (Sialkot). This naturally brought him into conflict with the rajas of Sakala (Sialkot) and Bahu Lochan lost his life in this conflict.<sup>13</sup> He was followed by his younger brother, Jambu Lochan, who later founded the city of Jammu. He continued to rule from Bahu and he died while fighting the Raja of Nagarkot (Kangra).<sup>14</sup> However, the hostility between the rulers of Bahu and Sakala continued. The rulers of Bahu had no option but to shift the capital from Bahu to Jammu as Bahu no

8. Ganesh Das Badehra, *Rajadarshani, a Persian History of North Western India From Earliest Times to 1847 A.D.* (English translation by S.D.S. Charak, Jammu 1991), p.8; Diwan Kirparam, *op cit* ; J.Hutchison and J.Ph. Vogel, *op cit.*, p.520; Narsingh Das Nargis, *op cit.*, p.51.
9. Y.B. Singh, "From glory to gloom; The case of the Madrajana" in Gulab Bhawan Research Series (Jammu), Vol. II, 1981, NO. I., pp.28-36.
10. J.Hutchison and J.Ph. Vogel, *op cit.*, p. 520; Narsingh Das Nargis, *op cit*, p.51; S.D.S. Charak, *op cit.*, p.33.
11. Kahn Singh Balauria, *op cit*, p.54; Narsingh Das Nargis, *op.,cit*, p.51.
12. M.M.Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, Etymologically and Philologically arranged with special references to cognate Indo European Languages, Delhi, 1984, p. 515.
13. Ganesh Dass Badehra, *op.cit.*, pp.8-9; Kahn Singh Balauria, *op.cit.*, p.54; Narsingh Das, Nargis, *op.cit.*, p.51; J.Hutchison and J.Ph. Vogel, *op.cit.*, pp. 520-21.
14. J.Hutchison and J.Ph. Vogel, *op cit*, p.523.

longer remained a safe proposition. Jammu lay across the river Tawi and now Tawi could be used as natural barrier in the times of war with rulers of Sakala. The rulers then fortified the entire town of Jammu and Jammu emerged as a fortified city.

1.6 Bahu, thus remained the capital of Jammu region till the 16th century.<sup>15</sup> It was during the time of Raja Jaggadeva (1500-1560 A.D.) that a dispute over the succession arose between him and his brother Samil Dev. As a result of this the state was divided into two parts with river Tawi as the boundary. The rajas ruling in Bahu began to be called Bahuwals and those in Jammu, Jamwals.<sup>16</sup> Thus, emerged the most important Rajputra clans of the *Duggar Desa*. Subsequent history indicates that both Jammu and Bahu were reunited and Bahu became a part of Jammu.<sup>17</sup> The people of united Jammu as mentioned earlier came to be known as Jamwals and in present day Jammu we do not find any Bahuwals.

1.7 The fort of Bahu, however, does not have any trace of the structure which was raised during the time of Bahu Lochan except for a few stones of the outer wall. The internal construction cannot be carried beyond seventeenth-eighteenth centuries as is evident from the use of tiles (Nanak Shahi or Lakhuri bricks) and lime mortar.

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15. J. Hutchison and J. Ph. Vogel, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 515. One contention is that after the Muslim invasions both Bahu and Jammu became insecure and the capital was shifted to Babbalpur (modern day Babor). This however, cannot be accepted because the archaeological explorations done in the area have shown only the remains of the temple, which were constructed in 1000 A.D. and 1300 A.D. No trace of fortified place has so far been found. Therefore, it was not possible for the ruling family and its retinue to live without a fort.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 535; Kahn Singh Balauria; *op. cit.*, p. 67, Narsingh Das Nargis, *op. cit.*, pp. 52, 75, 204.

17. There are two views regarding this. Hutchison and Vogel are of the opinion that the Bahu and Jammu were united under the rajas of Jammu during the time of Haridev. But local chronicles tell us that it was during the reign of Ranjit Dev that Bahu became a part of Jammu again. The view of Hutchison and Vogel seems to be more probable.

## ORIGIN OF THE MEOS : AN ASSESSMENT

Aijaz Ahmad \*

Mewat is a hilly region surrounded by the Arawali Ranges. Its inhabitants are known as Mewati while its Muslim population is called 'Meos'. Other communities are Jat, Gujar, Ahir, Meena, Rajput, Brahman, Mahajan, Harijan etc.<sup>1</sup> The geographical boundaries of Mewat have been changing from time to time. In the period of Shahabuddin Mohammad Ghorī the area of Mewat was from Delhi to Alwar and from Ajmer to Agra. During the Lodhi period the area comprised of the southern part of Delhi, Rewari, Narnaul, Tijara, Alwar, Bayana, Bharatpur and some parts of Agra with its capital at Kotla.<sup>2</sup>

A Meo poet has rightly described the area of Mewat as follows :

"Et Dilli ut Agra, Et Alwar Bairath

Kalo Pahar Suhawano, Jake Beech Baso Mewat"

But in modern times the Mewat comprises of southern part of Delhi, some areas of Gurgaon, Ballabhgarh, Alwar, Bharatpur and Mathura.<sup>3</sup>

The traditions and cultures of the Meos are similar to those of the Rajputs and they feel proud of calling themselves as the *Suryavanshi* and *Chandravanshi* Rajputs and Kashatriyas. But their origin bears many controversies as many historians and Meo scholars gave many theories regarding their origin. Arab historians believe that the Jats and the Meos are the descendants of Ham, the son of Nooh.<sup>4</sup> But the Meo scholars are of the opinion that the Meos were the descendants of Madia, the third son of Yapeth and the grandson of Nooh. According to them, the Aryans are the descendants of Yapeth, which proves that the Meos belong to the same branch as the Aryans.<sup>5</sup> It is generally believed by the Meo scholars that like the Aryans, the Meos also came from central or

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1. Abul Shakoor, *Tarikh-e-Meo Kashatriya*, Delhi, 1974, pp. 112-17.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 113-14.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 114.
4. Elliot & Dowson, *The History of India as told by its own Historians*, Vol. I, Allahabad, 1969, p. 519.
5. Rao Amrit Khan, *Tarikh-e-Meo*, Lahore (ND), p. 69; see also Siddique Ahmed, *Mewat Ek Khoj*, Delhi, 1997, p. 44.

west Asia and latter on settled down in Punjab and Sindh regions of Indian subcontinent. As the time passed they migrated to Rajasthan and then to the present area of Mewat.<sup>6</sup>

In order to prove that they are of ancient origin, many Meo scholars like Abul Shakoor, Maulana Zakaullah, Choudhary Mohammed Afzal Khan, Choudhary Ali Mohammed Khan etc. assert that Meos are amongst the oldest communities of India. Choudhary, Abdul Shakoor has given a long list of the words which are phonetically similar to Meo. This, according to him, had a definite historical and linguistic link with the Meo. These words are as follows :

Mer, Meral, Mor, Mori, May, Mao, Moria, Mari, Maro, Maria, Mewara, Meora, Meoras, Med, Medi, Meoran, Mewal, Malwi, Mawali, Meotala, Mehar, Meral, Marwar, Maruwar, Mewar, Merwara, Mewat, Mewas, Meras, Meriwat, Marusthal, Marusthan, Mardes, Marudes, Madhu, Madit, Medpat, Kedat, Marat etc.<sup>7</sup> He also advocates that it was the Meos spread in North-West of India which gave name to the regions and principalities such as Marwar, Meruwar, Mewar, Morwara, Mewat, Marusthal etc.<sup>8</sup>

The Meo scholars also claim, that the Meos are the one of the sections of the early Aryans who migrated to India and they were Kshatriyas by caste because their dynastic lineages, traditions, customs and life style are similar to those of Kshatriyas.<sup>9</sup> In the beginning Kshatriyas were divided into two dynasties – *Suryavanshi* and *Chandravanshi*. Later on four Agnikula dynasties– Parmar, Solanki, Chauhan and Chalukya emerged. But as the time passed their dynastic progeny multiplied, further they were divided into *gotra*<sup>10</sup> and *pal*.<sup>11</sup>

Like the Kshatriyas and Rajputs, the Meos are also divided into different dynasties, *gotras* and *pals* from ancient times. But in the time of Balban, a

6. Mohammed Habibur Rehman Khan Mewati, *Tazkira Sufia-e-Mewat*, p. 39.

7. Abul Shakoor, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 104-05.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 238-39.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 245. *Gotra* is a Sanskrit word meaning common house. It is said that initially when the people started settling themselves, they constructed a large common house to protect themselves from enemies and wild animals. This common house was known as *Gotra* and inhabitants of that house were considered as people of the same *Gotra*.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 250. In Hindi *Pal* means a group or party, but in Mewat *Pal* is considered to be a group of *Gotra*. Many *Gotras* combine to make a *Pal*.

Tomar Balot Meo Kaku Rana reorganised *gotra* and *pal* system and divided the Meos into 13 *pals* and 52 *gotras*.<sup>12</sup> Abul Shakoor gave the name of the *pals* and related dynasties as follows<sup>13</sup> :

<u>Dynasty</u>	<u>Pal</u>
Yadu	Chhirklot, Dimrot, Dulot, Pundlot, Nayai
Tomar	Balot, Ladawat, Dirwal, Ratawat
Chauhan	Pahat
Rathor	Kalisa
Kushwaha	Dahingal
Badgoonjar	Singal

Abul Shakoor while proving that the Meos are Kshatriyas and of the Aryan origin stated that Meos settlement was and still has been around the Arawali Ranges. The Arawali was so named because of the settlement of the Aryans. He also proves that the old name of this range was Aryabal which later on changed to Arbali and further to Arawali.<sup>14</sup>

An eminent scholar of Rajasthan history, James Tod has stated about Mer<sup>15</sup> tribe. They inhabited a region known as Merwara, a hilly region of Arawali ranges. This region was also called Merot and Merawat.<sup>16</sup> But Tod has never stated the word Meo or Mewat whereas Meo community was in abundance in Rajasthan at that time. Perhaps they were the Meos whom Tod has called the *Mer*. Abul Shakoor has also confirmed that in the early times the Meos were also called *Med* and *Mer*.<sup>17</sup> Tod again says that *Mer* was a branch of the Mina or Maina, one of the aborigines of India.<sup>18</sup> A Meo scholar Siddique Ahmed accepted the link of the Minas with the Meos but refuted that the Mer or Meos are a branch of the Minas and says that Mina were the off-shoots of Meos. He proves this fact by saying that the Minas were the descendants of the Greek Minu (a Meo tribe which later on separated themselves from that very tribe by giving up old region, customs and traditions of the Meos).<sup>19</sup> He confirms their

12. *Ibid.*, p. 385.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 257.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 115.

15. *Meru* or *Mer* is a Sanskrit word meaning a fabulous mountain. Merawat or Merot means belonging to the mountain. James Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*. Delhi, 1971, Vol. I, p. 789.

16. *Ibid.*,

17. Abul Shakoor, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

18. Tod, Vol. II, p. 789.

19. Siddique Ahmed, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

relationship by stating that both Minas and Meos have many common *pals* like Singal, Dehengal, Dulot, Pundlot, Demrot, Nayai etc.<sup>20</sup>

James Tod has also described another tribe, *Med*. He has stated that the Meds were the descendants of Yayati, third son of Nahush and Madai was the founder of the Meds. They spreaded in northern part of India, in Punjab and across the Indus.<sup>21</sup> They also might be the Meos because of a Meo scholar, Rao Amrit Khan stated that this area was inhabited by the Meos. He writes that in India the Meos had their rule one time or another in Sindh, Taxila, almost all parts of Rajasthan, Mathura and many areas of Uttar Pradesh.<sup>22</sup> Another historian Rashiduddin declares that both Meos and Jats lived in Sindh in the time of Mahabharata War. Elliot & Dowson also confirm that the Jats and the Meos<sup>23</sup> occupied the banks of the Indus in the province of Sindh. They invaded each others territory and later on they sent a deputation to Duryodhana, king of Hastinapur, begging to nominate a king to rule over them. Duryodhana accordingly nominated his sister Dussal (Dushala) the wife of Jayadratha.<sup>24</sup> Later on in that very region the Meos fought with many invaders like Iranians, Greeks, Muslims etc.<sup>25</sup>

At the time of Iranian conquest of North-Western India the Meos and Jats joined their army and spread to Iran and other parts of Iranian Empire. When the Muslims invaded and occupied Iran, they also embraced Islam and helped the Arabs in Islamic conquest.<sup>26</sup> The Arab history states that in the Arabian countries many Indians resided with the name of Zatt (Jat), Med (Meo), Takakra (Thakur) etc.<sup>27</sup>

Like the Iranians the Greeks and many other invaders invaded India and it resulted in the spread of the Meos to the native places of the conquerers. Rao Amrit Khan also states that the Meos has spreaded all over the world and established their sway at a number of places.<sup>28</sup> Mohammed Habibur Rahman

20. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

21. Tod, Vol. I, p. 50.

22. Rao Amrit Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

23. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. I, pp. 519-20. Arab historians and many other scholars called 24 Meos and Meds. It is being proved from many researches that before embracing Islam the Meos were known as Meds.

24. *Ibid.*

25. Mohammed Habibur Rehman Khan Mewati, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

27. *Ibid.*

28. Rao Amrit Khan, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-160.

Khan Mewati confirms that when the Arabs at first came to Sindh, they found two brave communities which gave very tough resistance to them. They were Meds (Meos) and Jats. Around the 2nd century A.D. a group of the Meds of Sindh entered Rajputana and settled in an area which came to be known with their name as 'Med-pat'. Later on its name was changed as 'Mewar'.<sup>29</sup> Subsequently they spreaded into the areas of Ajmer, Jaipur, Alwar, Bharatpur, Bairath, Mathura, Bayana, Ruhelkhand etc.<sup>30</sup> In Rajasthan they embraced Islam and in order to differentiate themselves from their parent community they called themselves as 'Meos' instead of 'Meds'.<sup>31</sup>

A large scale conversion started from the time of Mahmud of Ghazni. When he invaded India his nephew Syed Salar Masud Ghazi started Islamic Missionary work in Rajasthan and sent a deputation to Mewat under Syed Ibrahim. He defeated the Tomar Raja Tejpal of Tijara. Tejpal embraced Islam and took the name Jalal Khan. Later on many Tomars and other tribes and clans adopted Islam at the hands of Khawaja Muinuddin Chishti, Mian Syed Hussain Khan Sawar and Badiuddin urf Shah Madar.<sup>32</sup>

All the above mentioned opinions and statements of the Meo scholars are more traditional and hypothetical than historical. They try to prove that Meo community and their way of life has much more glorious background than any other community in the world. They have tried to connect each and every word starting with Mer, Med, Meen, Mar, Maru etc. with the word Meo. They are also of the opinion that all the above words have historical link with the word Meo. Their opinions are based more on conjunctures than on scientific examination.

No doubt, in the modern period the Meos are found in many parts of the world but their settlements in these areas are not of that antiquity as the Meo scholars prove to be. In India also the Meos have spread all over the country in search of livelihood and employment and they have stuck to their Meo identity in those settlements as well. These migrations can never be the logical proof of their glorious past. As far as Rajasthan is concerned, it is a desert and hilly region. In Sanskrit language the hills and mountains are called as Meru or Mer. So the word Mer has been added to most of the places, regions and kingdoms of Rajasthan, i.e. Ajmer, Jaisalmer, Badmer, Mewar, Marwar etc. The Meo scholars are of the opinion that these names exist due to Meo settlements. But it does not

29. Mohammed Habibur Rehman Khan Mewati, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

30. *Ibid.*, pp. 45-56.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 69.

32. Abul Shakoor, *op. cit.*, pp. 267-70. See also Rao Amrit Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 161; and Siddique Ahmed, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

at all appear to be logical and historical. The word 'Marusthal' also means a desert region and not the region of the Meos as asserted by Meo scholars.

The theory that the Meos were earlier known as Mods comes to be historical to a great extent. They might also be the offshoots of the same early Aryan Tribe. It is also probable that Mors and Meenas are the offshoots of the Mod tribe but history does not prove it.

The Meds had spreaded to Rajashtan and some of their leaders had also ruled over this area but most of them latter on adopted the agriculture occupation. The community in order to organise itself divided the brotherhood into *gotras* and *pals*. At the advent of Islam in India major part of the community embraced it and in order to distinguish themselves from the rest of the community, called themselves as Meos. In the modern period also in the Mewat region only Muslims are known as Meos. Their co-inhabitants are simply known as Mewati according to the name of the region Mewat.

## FATEHPURI MANUSCRIPT : THE PERIOD OF WRITING — A STATISTICAL STUDY

(Based on Bhakta Ravidas Bani)

Raijasbir Singh\*

Fatehpuri manuscript is preserved in Jaipur Mahal. It is said to be written in 1582/1639 B.K. The manuscript was prepared for Chhitarjidas, the son of Thakur Nursinghdas, a Kashwaha, ruler of Fatehpur, and later on in the period of Maharaj Kumar Singh (1661), it was placed in the Jaipur Mahal.<sup>1</sup>

It contains 262 *padas* of Surdas and 149 of other saints i.e. Namdev (11) Ravidas (5), Kabir (15) etc.<sup>2</sup> We are going to determine its period of writing by using statistical methods. In order to do so, we use only the specimen of Ravidas Bani included in *Adi Granth*, and the manuscript, we are applying Chi Square Test.

First of all the question arises : who is Narsinghdas Kashwaha of Amber (Jaipur)? There is no mention of Narsinghdas Kashwaha in *Akbar Nama*, *Mantukhab- U-tawarikh*, *Tauzak-i-Jahangiri*, *Muassar-i-Jahangiri*, *Muassar-ul-Umra*, *An Apparatus of Mughal Empire*, *Mansabdari System of Aurangzeb*. Col. Tod provides with the information that one Narsinghdas was a son of Govind Singh Shekhawat of Khandiala and brother of Bagh Singh who was a contemporary of George Thomas (1786-1802)<sup>3</sup>. Hence, the manuscript seems to be the contemporary of *Gurbilas Sukha Singh* (1970).<sup>4</sup> We compare the manuscript with *Gurbilas* also with the help of (Chi) Square Test.

Herein is the test —

### Fatehpuri Manuscript

No.	No. of Sabad & page	Total words	D/Words	%
1.	33,195	49	17	34.69

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1. Callewaert & Friedlander, *The Life and Works of Ravidas*. New Delhi, 1992, p. 37.

2. *The Hindi Padawali of Namdev*. p. 89.

3. Tod James, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*. Vol. 2. New Delhi, pp. 326, 334.

4. Kothari, C. R., *Research Methodology: Method and Techniques*, New Delhi, 1986, pp. 317-328, 474.

2.	33,195	34	12	35.29
3.	34,197	44	10	32.72
4.	51,205	36	07	19.14
5.	66,212	31	07	22.58
6.	86,221	45	14	<u>31.11</u>

$$\underline{165.53/6 = 27.58}$$

### Bhakta Ravidas Bani

1.	Gauri 1,345	73	27	36.98
2.	Asa 2,486	53	29	54.71
3.	Gujri 1,525	60	28	46.66
4.	Sorathi 6,659	73	37	50.68
5.	Dhanasari 1,694	48	24	50.00
6.	Suhi 3,794	56	26	46.92
7.	Ramkali 1,973	69	38	55.07
8.	Maru 1,1106	49	20	40.87
9.	Bhairon 1,1167	89	41	46.06
10.	Basant 1,1196	92	43	<u>46.73</u>

$$\underline{474.18/10=47.41}$$

$$O_1 = (\text{Ravidas bani}) = 47.41$$

$$O_2 = (\text{Fatehpuri MS}) = 27.58$$

$$E = 47.41 - 27.58 = 74.99/2 = 37.49$$

$$O_1 - E = 47.41 - 37.49 = 9.92$$

$$O_2 - E = 27.58 - 37.49 = -9.89$$

$$(O_1 - E)^2 = (9.92)^2 = 98.40$$

$$(O_2 - E)^2 = (-9.89)^2 = 97.81$$

$$(O_1 - E)^2/E = 98.40/27.58 = 3.56$$

$$(O_2 - E)^2/E = 97.81/27.58 = 3.54$$

$$\text{Calculated Value } (x) = 7.10$$

$$\text{Table Value} = 3.841$$

### Fatehpuri MS & Guru Arjan Bani

	Guru Arjan Bani	Fatehpuri MS.	%
1.	Sri 83,46	136	26.47
2.	Gauri 80, 179	100	37.00
3.	Asa 6,372	85	41.17
4.	Wadhans Chhant 1,577	64	35.93
5.	Suhi 41,745	73	52.05
6.	Ramkali Ashat 3,912	71	43.66

7.	Maru 13, 1002	72	26	36.11
8.	Bhairon 5,1137	62	22	35.44
9.	Malhar 20,1270	97	41	42.26
10.	Salokas 6,7,1425	84	46	<u>54.76</u>
				<u>404.95/10=40.45</u>

$$O_1 = (\text{Guru Arjan Bani}) = 40.49$$

$$O_2 = (\text{Fatehpuri MS}) = 27.58$$

$$E = 40.49 + 27.58 = 68.07/2 = 34.03$$

$$O_1 - E = 40.49 - 34.03 = 6.46$$

$$O_2 - E = 27.58 - 34.03 = -6.45$$

$$(O_1 - E)^2 = (6.46)^2 = 41.75$$

$$(O_2 - E)^2 = (-6.45)^2 = 41.60$$

$$(O_1 - E)^2 / E = 41.75 / 34.03 = 1.22$$

$$(O_2 - E)^2 / E = 41.60 / 34.03 = 1.22$$

$$\text{Calculated Value ( } \chi^2 \text{ )} = 2.44$$

Table Value at %

#### Fatehpuri MS & Gurbilas Sukha Singh

	Gurbilas	Sukhas Singh	Fatehpuri MS	%
1.	1	120	38	31.66
2.	45	122	32	26.22
3.	90	109	30	27.52
4.	135	129	45	34.88
5.	181	83	25	30.12
6.	225	96	25	26.04
7.	260	97	23	23.71
8.	308	81	27	33.33
9.	350	82	25	30.48
10.	428	116	37	<u>31.89</u>
				<u>295.85/10=29.58</u>

$$O_1 = 29.58$$

$$O_2 = 27.58$$

$$E = 29.58 + 27.58 = 57.16/2 = 28.58$$

$$O_1 - E = 29.58 - 28.58 = 1.00$$

$$O_2 - E = 27.58 - 28.58 = -1.00$$

$$(O_1 - E)^2 = (1.00)^2$$

$$(O_2 - E)^2 = (-1.00)^2$$

$$(O_1 - E)^2 / E = 1.00 / 28.58 = 0.0349$$

$$(\sum O_i - E)^2 / E = 1.00 / 28.58 = 0.0349$$

$$\text{Calculated Value } (X^2) = 0.0698$$

Table Value at 5% level = 3.841

Works	Calculated Value of X	Table Value
1. Bhakta Ravidas Bani & Fatehpuri MS.	7.10	3.841 at 5%
2. Guru Arjan Bani & Fatehpuri MS.	2.44	" " " "
3. Gurbilas Sukha Singh & Fatehpuri MS.	0.0698	" " " "

The test shows that —

1. Bhakta Ravidas *Bani* is far more earlier than the *Bani* in Fatehpuri manuscript.
2. The *Bani* of Guru Arjan Dev who compiled *Adi Granth* is also earlier than it.
3. *Gurbilas Sukha Singh* (1797) is the contemporary of the manuscript.  
Hence, the Fatehpuri manuscript is of late 18th century and it can not be of earlier than *Adi Granth*.

## THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE PUNJAB DURING SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

Daljit Singh \*

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the position of women was very inferior in the society. It won't be wrong if we say that they were treated as the dregs of the society.<sup>1</sup> Woman was not having independence in any stage of her life.<sup>2</sup> The birth of daughter was considered inauspicious, while that of a son was an occasion for rejoicing. As a daughter, she lived under the strict supervision of her parents, after marriage under that of her husband and as a widow under care of eldest son.<sup>3</sup> K.M. Ashraf writes that the main function of woman was considered to be bringing forth a son and after that she was honoured and looked after by the people.<sup>4</sup>

The birth of a girl was never looked upon with a favour and several high castes, such as the Rajputs practised female infanticide.<sup>5</sup> The Hindus adopted the practice of female infanticide with a view to escape the risk of their girls losing chastity at the hands of their enemies and foreign invaders. On number of occasions the Hindu chiefs and well-to-do families were compelled by the Muslim rulers and nobles to give their daughters in marriage. To escape all these ignominies they started practising female infanticide. The Rajputs resorted to this practice due to the scarcity of suitable matches because of the prohibition of marriage between families of the same clan, continuous wars and feuds with neighbouring tribes together with the sentiment that an unworthy match lowers

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1. Folklore literature refers to the degraded position of women in the medieval Punjab. For example Pcelu, a *Kisakar* of medieval period writes in Piara Singh, Gobind Singh Lamba (eds.), *Sassi Ate Hor Qisse*, Rachit Rajhan Barkhurdar, Amritsar, 1977, p. 111.

ਭੱਠ ਰੰਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਦੋਸਤੀ, ਖੁਰੀਂ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਮੌਤ।

ਹੱਸ ਹੱਸ ਲਾਉਂਦੀਆਂ ਯਾਰੀਆਂ, ਪਿੱਛੋਂ ਰੋ ਰੋ ਦੇਂਦੀਆਂ ਦੱਸ।

2. K.M. Ashraf, *Life and Condition of the People of Hindustan*, New Delhi, 1970, pp. 166-67.
3. D. F. Mulla, *Principles of Hindu Law*, 3rd Edition, Bombay, 1929, p. 37.
4. K.M. Ashraf, *op.cit.*, p. 16.
5. Guru Arjan Dev, *Adi Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji*, quoted as *Adi Granth ; Sri Damdami Bir*, various printed editions, standard pagination 1430, *Slok Mahala* 3, p. 1413.

the prestige of the bride's father.<sup>6</sup>

The girls were generally married at a young age (child marriage was also common) and polygamy was in vogue among the rich people.<sup>7</sup> Another evil which found its way into Hindu society as a result of the impact of Islam was slavery. No doubt slavery was known to the Indians even before the advent of the Muslims, but the Muslim rulers specially patronised it. On the frontiers of the Punjab, there was an open trade in women where they were measured and sold under different standards. Prostitution was rampant and the profession of dancing girls who quenched the thirst of the greedy and lustful eyes was profitable and was patronised by those who should be the censors of the public morals.<sup>8</sup>

The *purdah* system was unknown in ancient India and the women could move about freely. But with the advent of Muslims in India, one of the immediate impact on the condition of woman was the introduction of *purdah* system.<sup>9</sup> With the arrival of the Muslims they were compelled to live in four walls of their homes and restricted to move outside. Proverbs of the time reflected the attitude that a woman must be confined to her home and hearth and the less she moves out, the better.<sup>10</sup>

Veiling of woman or *purdah* was a common practice among the Muslims and it was adopted by the Hindu woman also under the prevailing circumstances. This system was prevalent among the Muslim ladies of the Sultanate as well as Mughal periods. Both Alberuni and Barni have made references to this practice. Firoz Shah was very particular about this practice being observed by the ladies in his kingdom. He forbade the free mixing of men and women even on special occasions. This system was of course not prevalent among the people of lower classes such as peasants, artisans and menials because the nature of their work prevented them from remaining indoors, behind the veil or *purdah*. Generally women, especially of aristocratic class practiced it and if it was absolutely essential to come out of the *purdah* they did so by putting a mask or veil over their faces. In Akbar's time, "If a woman was found running about the lane and

6. Col. James Tod, *The Annals and Antiquities of Rajashtan*, Vol. II, ed. William Crooke, Delhi, 1971, pp. 739-40.

7. K.M. Ashraf, *op. cit.*, pp. 167-68.

8. *Adi Granth*, Raga Gauri Mahala 5, p. 239; Raga Suhi, Mahala 1, p. 790.

9. *Ibid*, Asa Shiri Kabir Ji, Do padas, p. 484.

10. ਅੰਦਰ ਬੈਠੀ ਲੱਖ ਦੀ, ਬਾਹਰ ਗਈ ਕੱਖ ਦੀ, Quoted in G.S. Chhabra, *Advanced History of Punjab*, Vol. I, 2nd. revised edition, Jullundur, 1968, p. 14.

*hazar* of town, and while so doing did not veil herself (she) was to go to the other side and become a prostitute."<sup>11</sup> According to Manucci, "the Muslims were so extraordinarily distrustful" in this matter that they did not permit their women to appear before them (their own brothers)<sup>12</sup>. This common practice among the Muslims was adopted by the Hindu women also while going out in public. Muslim women of middle class families also observed this practice.

Prof. R.C. Majumdar says, "Hindus adopted *purdah* as a protective measure to save the honour of their women folk and to maintain the purity of their social order. Probably the tendency to immitate ruling class was also a contributory factor for the adoption of *purdah* by the Hindu families. The Muslim ladies rarely went out and whenever they had to go out they moved in covered palanquins. Even the discarding of this practice by the upper strata or the nobility was not favoured, but there are instances of queens like that of Nurjahan who did not observed this practice. The Hindu ladies of upper castes did not used *hurqa* but instead they covered their head and face with a *dupatta* (even now it goes under the name of *goonghat*).<sup>13</sup> No doubt, some sort of *purdah* in shape of *goonghat* was observed in India even before the advent of the Muslims as a mark of respect to the elder male members of her inlaws but the elaborate and institutionalized form of *purdah* emerged with the advent of Muslims. The chief reason for the adoption of *purdah* by the Hindu women was to protect the beautiful young girls from the ill-designs of rich nobles. But during this period the women of the poorer classes including the lower strata of the Rajputs went outside unveiled. They had to help their menfolk in the fields and in their other pursuits and consequently they could not help to observe any *purdah*

The *sati* or the custom of burning the women on the funeral pyre of her dead husband was another horrible and extremely inhuman practice.<sup>14</sup> According to this practice the wife burnt herself on the funeral pyre of her dead husband and it<sup>15</sup> was considered by the society to be holy and glorious act on the part of the widow to do so.

The condition of widow was very miserable in the society and the

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11. Abdul Qadir Badaoni or Al-Badaoni, *Muntakhab-Tawarikh*, Eng. trs. & ed., W.H. Lowe, Vol. II, Delhi. 1973. p. 405.

12. Niccolas Manucci, *Storia do Mogor*, Eng. tr. W. Irvine, Vol. II. calcutta, p.352.

13. K.M. Ashraf, *op.cit.*, p. 167.

14. L.A. Orlich, *Travels in India, Sind and Punjab*, Vol. I, London, p. 169.

15. *Adi Granth. Gauri Kabir Ji*, p. 328.

conditions were very hard for her to bear. Widow remarriage was permitted amongst the Muslims but the widows were given the status of a second rate wife. Amongst the Hindus widow remarriage was almost non-existent during the medieval period except in the lower classes and the jats. The widow had two alternatives—to live as celibate for the rest of life or burnt herself on the funeral pyre of her dead husband. Many a time she choose the later alternative.<sup>16</sup>

Widows of higher Hindu castes were not permitted to bear long hair or to put on ornaments. They were considered as unfortunate creatures and were despised. They were made to do the ordinary menial jobs in the family. In Sikhism the woman is given a exorted status equal to that of a man. Due to this the woman received a special place in the 'Sikh society. Guru Nanak in his *bani* remarked that how you can despise women, when they given birth to the kings and rulers.<sup>17</sup>

The practice of *sati* is also condemned in Sikhism. In their *bani* the Sikh Gurus exhorted the people and the women to do away with this barbaric custom.<sup>18</sup> According to Prinsep, Sikh women did not burn themselves with the corpse of their husbands.<sup>19</sup>

Another evil practice prevalent amongst the Hindus, particularly the Rajputs was *jauhar*. Usually *jauhar* was performed by the Rajput ladies when attacked by the foreigners and there was no hope of escape and the defeat was imminent. According to this practice the Rajput ladies would apply *tilak* on the foreheads of their husbands, touched their feet and burnt themselves on the mass funeral pyre.<sup>20</sup> This was done primarily to escape dishonour at the hands of the enemy in case of the defeat. The Rajput ladies cared more for their honour (not to be sexually defiled) than their life.

Divorce was another feature of Muslim society but it was not practiced in the Hindu society. Even the abodening of the women although practiced, but was not a common practice among the Hindus. The divorce amongst the *Shias* was more regulated than amongst the *Sunis*. In matters of divorce the husband enjoyed absolute and unquestioned powers, while the wife was denied the

16. M.P. Srivastava, *Society and Culture in Medieval India, 1206-1707*, Allahabad, 1975, p. 93.

17. ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖਿਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੰਮੈ ਰਾਜਾਨ. *Adi Granth, Mahala 1*, p. 473.

18. *Adi Granth, Raga Suhi, Mahala 3*, p. 787.

19. Henry T. Prinsep. *Origin of the Sikh Power in the Punjab and Political Life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh*. London, 1834, p. 169.

20. Abul Fazal. *Akbar Nama*, Eng. trs. Henry Beveridge, Vol. II, Delhi, 1972.

same. There was also provision for reunion after divorce.

Though the position of a woman, as a girl, as a bride and as a widow was quite miserable, yet she enjoyed a position of great respect as a mother. In almost all the sections of Hindu society mothers and other elderly women were given utmost respect and their commands were invariably carried out. The Rajputs showed maximum regard to their mothers, and never dared to go against their wishes, howsoever unreasonable they might have been. There are many instances of Rajput rulers taking their meals only after paying respects to their mothers.<sup>21</sup>

The Muslims also showed great regard to their mothers. There are quite a few instances when the ladies i.e. mothers acted as successful mediators in the family feuds. For example, it is well known that the differences between Akbar and his rebels son Jahangir were settled mainly through the intervention of Salima Begum. Similarly it was at the instance of Jahanara (sister of Aurangzeb) that Aurangzeb was pardoned by Shahjahan and restored to the dignities and emoluments.

Though the women were not given a position of pride in the social structure of the Muslim society yet talented women made a mark in different spheres. These women mainly belonged to the higher well-to-do class. Gulbadan Begum and Jahanara produced works which are not only of great historical importance but are considered outstanding works.

Women also played an important role in administration of state. Maham Anaga, the chief nurse of Akbar, influenced the affairs of the state for full four years from 1560-64. Similarly, it is well known that Nurjahan was the real power behind the throne of Jahangir.

There were many varieties of dress among women. Babur wrote in his *Baburnama*, "Women also tie on a cloth (*lang*) one of which goes round the waist, the other is thrown over the head."<sup>22</sup> The Hindu usually used a long *chaddar* or fine sheet of muslin and a bodice or *choli* with short sleeves. The grown up ladies and women used an additional garment known as *angiya*. Stavorinus writes, "They support their breasts and press them upwards by a piece of linen which passes under the arms and is made fasten the back."<sup>23</sup>

21. James Tod, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 479.

22. Zahir-ud-din Muhammad Babur, *Babur Name*, Eng. trs. A.S. Beveridge, Vol. II, New Delhi, 1970, p. 519.

23. John Splinter Stavorinus, *Voyages to the East Indies*, Eng. trs. Samuel Hull, Willcocke, Vol. I, London, 1848, p. 47.

The Muslim ladies wore *salwars*, a shirt with half length sleeves and a long sraf. In the Punjab *sulhan*<sup>24</sup> was also wore by the women. These dresses were common among the Hindu and Sikh women. In the towns the dress was more varied, but the paticcoat among the women of the Hindu trading class was popular.<sup>25</sup>

Education of women was not ignored in those days, but it was confined to upper class ladies. In the *Maasir-i-Alamgiri*, we find a reference to the education of the females of Aurangzeb's *haram*. All the females of his *haram* under his direction, learnt the necessary rules of the doctrine of religion, and all were engaged in the worship of God, reading and transcribing the *Quran*.<sup>26</sup> Numerous instances in our period are available of highly educated and accomplished ladies belonging to royal families as well as to the aristocratic classes.

Durgawati<sup>27</sup>, Gulbadan Begum, Salima Sultana<sup>28</sup>, Mumtaj Mahal,<sup>29</sup> Jahanara<sup>30</sup>, Zeb-un-Nisa (daughter of Aurangzeb)<sup>31</sup>, Mira Bai and Rupwati<sup>32</sup> (wife of Baz Bahadur, ruler of Malwa, during Akbar's time, she was a poetess) were renowned for their refinement and learning.

It is interesting to note here that some of the Mughal ladies of repute were also highly interested in the collection of books for their personal libraries. During the period under review, almost every royal lady of the Mughal court had her personal library, where she devoted her time to reading and writing for her academic advancement and recreation. It is said Gulbadan Begum wrote the famous *Humayun-namah*. She had her own library in the *zanana* where she used to read the famous works.<sup>33</sup> Salima Sultana<sup>34</sup> was also a learned lady who wrote a number of poems in Persian and was given the pen name of Makhfi.

24. *Lahore District Gazetteer*, 1893-94, p. 48.

25. *Amrtsar District Gazetteer*, 1892-93, pp. 39-40.

26. Saqi Mustaid Khan, *Maasir-i-Alamgiri*, Eng. trs. J.N. Sarkar, Calcutta, 1947, p. 318.

27. Abul Fazl, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 324-325.

28. Nur-ud-din Muhammad Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Vol. I, Eng. trs. A Rogers and H. Beveridge, ed. Delhi, 1968 (Reprint), p. 232.

29. Rekha Misra, *Position of Women in Medieval India*, p. 120.

30. *Islamic Culture*, Vol. XXXIV, Calcutta, 1960, p. 119, *Storia*, Vol. IV, p. 423.

31. *Maasir-i-Alamgiri*, p. 232.

32. G.T. Garatt (ed), *The Legacy of India*, Oxford, 1937, p. 383.

33. Gulbadan Begum, *Humayan nama*, Eng. trs. A.S. Beveridge preserved in Punjab State Archives, Patiala, London, 1902, p. 76.

34. Badaoni, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 389.

Noorjahan & Mumtaz Mahal<sup>35</sup> were well versed in Persian and the latter wrote a number of poems in Persian. Similarly Jahanara,<sup>36</sup> the eldest daughter of Shah Jahan encouraged learned men in her father's court and Zeb-un-Nisa,<sup>37</sup> eldest daughter of Aurangzeb was also well known for reading and writing. These are some of the most striking examples in this respect.

The upper class women paid great attention to the physical adornment. The women whether Muslim or Hindu had a special weakness for ornaments. There were variation of the ornaments worn by them. For the married women wearing of ornaments all over the body was symbol of *suhaag*.

The Hindu widows did not use ornaments or jewelry and wiped out scarlet line of vermilion from the head.<sup>38</sup> Abul Fazal has mentioned thirty seven kinds of different ornaments used by women in India.<sup>39</sup> For example *chauk*, *mang*, *pipalpatti*, *morbhanwer* and *bali* were the different types of earrings. Nose ornament seemed to have been introduced by Muhammedans.<sup>40</sup> Necklace were worn of gold, pearls and other precious stones which contained five to seven strings of gold bead. Rings were worn on toes and fingers. *Bazuband*, *kangan* and *payals* (ornament of legs) were also used by the ladies at that time.

Abul Fazal has also mentioned sixteen items of female toilet which were considered a must for the ladies of aristocratic families. These include a bath; an oil massage, dressing of hair, putting on ornament on forehead together with sandal wood paste, a suitable dress, a caste mark, antimony for the eyes, pendants for ears, a pearl of gold for nose, some ornaments for neck, henna for hands etc.<sup>42</sup> The *Ain-i-Akbari* gives a long list of scents and itters and their prices. Hindu ladies usually tied their hair behind their heads. Sometimes they twisted their hair and coiled it on the top of their head like a pyramid sticking a gold bodkins in the centre. Married Hindu ladies considered it auspicious to put a vermilion mark to anoint the parting of their hair. Indian woman frequently

35. J.N. Sarkar, *Studies in Mughal India*, Calcutta, 1919, pp. 20-23 (her chief personal servant, Sat-un-Nisa, a learned lady of her time).

36. *Ibid.*, p. 121.

37. *Maasir-i-Alamgiri*, p. 322.

38. S.C. Raychoudhary, *Social, Cultural and Economic History of India*, p.64.

39. Abul Fazal, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol.III, pp.342-43.

40. P.N. Chopra, B.N. Puri, M.N. Das; *A Social, Cultural & Economic History of India*, Vol.II, p.52.

41. Warish Shah, *Qissa Heer Warish*, ed. by J.S. Sittal, Delhi, 1963, verse 189.; G.S. Gill, *Heer Kav Parampara Atte Heer Mukbal*, Ludhiana, 1977, p.83.

42. *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol.III, pp.342-43.

used henna to dye their hands<sup>43</sup> and feet red. It also served as nail polish. The bark of dandrasa was used for making the lips red.<sup>44</sup> It was a substitute of a modern lipstick. Combs, made of wood, metal or animal horns were in much use.

The women of rich classes during the Mughal period were fond of games and sports. The chess, chaupar, playing cards, games of guties called tiger play of various types were common with upper and middle class people of both sexes.<sup>45</sup> It was common for the women in the *zanana* of the rich to enjoy the dance and dramatic shows and listened to stories of love and adventure.

However, the women of the poor section of the society whether the Muslims or Hindus do not enjoy the good dresses, decoration of their bodies and use of ornaments.

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43. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol.I, Calcutta, 1935, p.279.

44. John Frayer and Sir Thomas Roe, *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, London, 1873, p.180.

45. Gulbadan Begum, *Humayu Nama*, Eng. trs. A.S. Beveridge, preserved in Punjab State Archives, Patiala, London, 1902, p.77; Lane Poole, *History of India*, Vol.IV, p.37; J.N.Sarkar, *Studies in Mughal India*, Culcutta, 1904, p.82; A.L.Srivastava, Agra, 1990, p.20.

## OPENING OF AN ERA

Prithipal Singh Kapoor \*

The story of the rise of Maharaja Ranjit Singh is intertwined not only with the history of a little over three centuries spanning between the advent of Guru Nanak and the rise of Ranjit Singh, but it can be said to have developed under the shadow of earlier seven hundred years of continued strife between two civilizations as well. The agony of this strife made the wise of the two religious systems viz. Hinduism and Islam to peep within. This "soul-searching" exercise was in fact seeking to emphasise such religious values of Hinduism and Islam within their own sphere that could lay stress on equality, co-existence and toleration of different view-points. In the course of time these endeavours became movements for manifestations of true religious life in both these traditions and got the names Bhakti (in case of Hinduism) and Sufism (in case of Islam), respectively. Having paid heavy price for the continued strife on their soil, the people of Punjab responded warmly to this development which symbolized in the emergence of Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikh religion, who gave a new meaning to the spiritual and the temporal concerns of man that encompassed the different facets of human life in its totality. Guru Nanak's primary concern remained the spiritual realm and there is ample evidence to show that he possessed profound knowledge of the then extant religious systems. But the doctrine he propounded fructified through his own mystic experience and direct revelation. He was the first among the holy personages who condemned war, exploitation and appropriation of other's rights. He exalted truth above everything. That is why we find him vocal on the things political. His reaction to Babur's invasion and the Lodhi's inability to defend the country is enshrined in his '*Babur Vani*' included in the *Guru Granth Sahib*. From this flows the idea of such a governance that ensures protection and welfare of the people. For Guru Nanak all the people belonged to one human family. This widened the scope to his ideas of unity of God and equality of mankind. The nine successors of Guru Nanak brought into being such institutions that provided a distinct way of life, a new scripture with a global ethic and an invisible spirit that could stand the severest of the persecution waves let loose by the Mughals and the Afghans. The last of the Sikh Gurus, Gobind Singh, anointed the Khalsa 'to build up a community that would live a virtuous life and be able to rescue the people from evil doers and the tyrants' (Senapat, *Sri Guru Sobha*). Guru Gobind Singh vested the authority of the Guru in the *Granth* and the *Panth*. This was in fact an act that sought to clearly define the spiritual

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and the secular. Truth, virtue, and righteousness were to guide the path of life as also the struggle against oppression which the Khalsa was destined to wage. Banda, an ascetic-turned-Sikh blessed by Guru Gobind Singh himself was the first inspired leader to lead the Khalsa after the Gurus. He had the mandate 'to serve the *Panth*.' His first task was to punish the oppressor which he did with remarkable alacrity and the Sikhs became the masters of the territories of Punjab that lay east of Lahore. But he did not proclaim himself a sovereign. He assumed authority in the name of the Gurus, introduced an official seal and struck coins in the name of the Gurus. The ideal set before the administrative system, he created, was aimed at amelioration of the peasants and the poor. An official report by a news-writer reveals that Banda, during his stay at Kalanaur in April 1711, had assured the Muslims that they would not be interfered with and that they would enjoy full religious liberty including that of saying *Namaz* and *Azam*. These measures showed the way ahead to the coming generations of Sikhs (including Ranjit Singh, of course) who led the struggle to oust the Mughals and the Afghans from Punjab and stake claim for sovereignty over this legendary plain of five rivers.

However, it was not until 1748 that the Khalsa was declared a state. This followed a collective decision taken in a congregation of the Khalsa held on 29 March 1748 (the *Baisakhi* day). This declaration had wider ramifications in so far as the rise of the Sikhs to power was concerned. It was decided to ask the people not to pay revenue to either the Mughal or Afghan *nazims/faujdar*s; instead they were to pay a cess called *Rakhi* to the Khalsa in return for guarantee for protection against the invaders or arbitrary demands of the Mughal/Afghan *Chaudhris*. In order to create confidence among the people as to the genuineness of the Khalsa evocation, it was decided to build fortresses in the territories which accepted the protection of the Khalsa and agreed to pay *Rakhi*. Viewed in the light of this, the earliest form of government envisioned by the Sikh Sardars sought to ensure protection to life, property and religious freedom of the people in return for payment of taxes (read *Rakhi*). The contemporary records nowhere mention arbitrary exactions by the Sikh Sardars. Repeated waves of persecutions and general massacres like *ghallughara* notwithstanding, the Sikh fighting bands (*jathas*) led by their intrepid leader like Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, Jassa Singh Ramgarhia, Hari Singh and Jhanda Singh Bhangis, Jai Singh Kanheya, Charhat Singh Sukerchakia (grandfather of Maharaja Ranjit Singh) and Ala Singh of Phulkian family remained well on their way to carve out principalities in various tracts of the Punjab. In the process, some of them like Charhat Singh came to realise the importance of artillery and acquisition of such territories that ensured realisation of revenues other than *Rakhi*. Besides, they also learnt about the strategic importance of various locations that came under their sway. All this made them contenders for suzerainty over Punjab

and hence-to-fore they fought relentlessly against the Afghans/Mughals or any other intruder like the Marathas and did not allow them to establish even semblance of a government in the Punjab.

After the fall of Lahore and Sirhind the Sikhs decided to occupy territories under the banner of Misls who had fought to oust Afghans/Mughals/Marathas or annihilate the local chiefs like that of Kasur, Jammu or Kangra. Charhat Singh occupied territories in the Rachna Doab and went on to add territories to his estate extending up to river Indus. The principal towns included in his territory were Gujranwala, Wazirabad, Ram Nagar, Sialkot Rohtas and Pind Dadan Khan and Dhani-Pothohar areas. A close study of the events of progress of the Sukerchakias under Charhat Singh reveals that he drew the outlines of the policies to be followed by his son Mahan Singh and grandson Ranjit Singh. He appointed efficient *Kardars* for the administration of his territories and showed mercy and kindness towards those who accepted his overlordship. He also entered into matrimonial alliances with Dal Singh and Sahib Singh Bhangi by marrying his sister and daughter to each of them respectively, so as strengthen his own position. But when it came to the interests of his state, he even fell out with his erst- while allies, the Bhangis and refused to share with them the Kheora salt mines in Jhelum district near Pind Dadan Khan. It is noteworthy that kheora salt was consumed in the whole of north India and brought huge revenue to the state. He also cast his covetous eyes on the wealth of Jammu which was subsequently grabbed by his son Mahan Singh.

After the sudden death of Charhat Singh, Mahan Singh continued with the policy of self- aggrandizement towards the Bhangis, the Kanheyas and the Jammu Chief. There is no doubt that before his death Mahan Singh had attained the position of being the strongest of the Sikh Sardars and many influential Sardars thought it wise to join his banner. He had also humbled some of the most powerful Muslim Chiefs, having captured Alipur (renamed Aḷgarh) and Rasalnagar (renamed Ram Nagar). Besides, Mahan Singh had also shown the way to his son Ranjit Singh, to keep the welfare of his subjects upper most in his mind. It is said that during the eighties of the eighteenth century, when there were no rains in Punjab continuously for three years and the severest of the famines broke out, Mahan Singh arranged to distribute grains to the people on a large scale.

There is little doubt that Charhat Singh and Mahan Singh left Ranjit Singh a rich legacy with immense resources to enable him to unify Punjab and carve out a vast kingdom between the Indus and the Yamuna. Besides, luck seemed to smile on him. All the great Sikh Sardars of eighteenth century had either passed into history or were too old and exhausted to stall the rise of this young ambitious Sukerchakia Chief and there was none among the notables of his own generation who could challenge his position. The fall of the Mughals

and retreat of the Afghans left the Muslim Chiefs dazed and disheartened. The attempts of the Hindu hill Chiefs of Kangra and Jammu to lay hands on the plains had been fully thwarted. But despite all this, the odds before Ranjit Singh were not easy to surmount. The entire area that constituted the Lahore, Multan and Sirhind provinces of the erstwhile Mughal Empire presented a spectacle of a congeries of small states. Zaman Shah Durrani of Kabul had not yet reconciled to the idea of relinquishing his claim to the Punjab. He hoped to get active support and help from the Muslim chiefs of Multan, Jhang, Pind Dadan Khan and Kasur and even had the audacity to make overtures to the Nawab of Oudh, Rajas of Kangra and Jammu and the East India Company to solicit their help against the Sikhs. On the other hand, the Sikhs had lost cohesion. The appeal of *Gurmata* and *Dal Khalsa* had weakened due to mutual recriminations and discord that had crept into their ranks on account of their lust for territory. Many of them even responded to the invitation of Zaman Shah to acknowledge his nominal overlordship. At one stage even Ranjit Singh sent his agents to the Shah. But it was Baba Sahib Singh Bedi who gave a call to the Sikh Sardars not to conduct themselves in an unbecoming manner. He even scolded the emissaries of Zaman Shah and said, "we took this country by sword and will defend it with the same." Zaman Shah's invasion and the Sikh response demonstrated full well that it was only Ranjit Singh who could provide leadership and challenge the new invader from Kabul at the very door-steps of the Lahore fort. In this situation a model of governance based on the democratic principles of the Khalsa doctrine had still to take shape and it was left for an ambitious intrepid chief like Ranjit Singh to absorb the power of his associates, humble the recalcitrant and carve out a kingdom with a monarchical complexion. This was perhaps the only option available at that time.

With the vast territories in the *Rachna Doab* and beyond already under his sway, he had to first occupy the historic city of Lahore to stake his claim to sovereignty. Having accomplished this task, arrangements were made for what we now prefer to call the 'coronation' ceremony. Whatever might be its connotation for those who care to study its implications in terms of polity, the event carried great significance in the context of the situation obtaining in those times. On the *Baisakhi* day falling in April 1801, Lahore city was decorated like a bride, and a large number of people drawn from the elite of all communities of Lahore, the Sikh Sardars who had accepted the over-lordship of Ranjit Singh and the emissaries of two powerful neighbours, Zaman Shah and the British East India Company, assembled in the Lahore fort to witness the anointment of Ranjit Singh. Baba Sahib Singh Bedi, a prominent Sikh divine and direct descendant from the family tree of Guru Nanak, performed the ceremony by putting saffron mark on the forehead of Ranjit Singh to declare him *Sarkar* amidst the chanting of hymns from the *Guru Granth Sahib*. Here to fore Ranjit Singh was

called Singh Sahib as head of the Sukerchakia *Misl*. His new epithet was not high sounding but it decidedly gave him a distinguished position that entitled him to a higher status among the Sikh *Misldars* and a new stature in face of those who felt dreamt of gaining strength day by day.

If the proceedings of this occasion are followed closely, we also get ample evidence of the diplomatic skill that Ranjit Singh employed to ensure his acceptance as the *de facto* sovereign of the Punjab. He did not hesitate to enter into parleys with Zaman Shah during his month long stay at Lahore and he followed it by allowing him to return safely to Kabul without any assault on the retreating Afghan forces and extrication of eight of the twelve guns of the Shah that had sunk in the river Jhelum. Dewan Ram Dayal, Zaman Shah's emissary, was present at Lahore when the investiture ceremony was held. Ranjit Singh ensured his presence in the august assembly that witnessed the ceremony as also the offering of presents on behalf of the Shah. Yusuf Ali Khan was also present in Lahore with the approval of Governor General Wellesley ostensibly to prevent Ranjit Singh from forging an alliance with Zaman Shah. Simultaneously he was holding parleys with Cis-Sutlej Chiefs including Sardarni Sada Kaur, Fateh Singh Ahluwalia and others. References in *Fateh Singh Partap Parbhakar* make it amply clear that Ranjit Singh was anxious to let Yusuf Ali Khan know in no-uncertain terms that he was an independent ruler in his own right and did not derive any authority from Zaman Shah. To further pressurise Yusuf Ali Khan, he allowed an emissary of General Perron to offer presents on behalf of Maratha Chief, Daulat Rao Scindia, and did not allow Yusuf Ali to leave Lahore till 9 May 1801. On his own, Yusuf Ali pleaded frantically with Col. Collins (British representative at Gwalior) to send presents to Ranjit Singh. These diplomatic moves of Ranjit Singh, so well executed, were intended to demonstrate his position as a sovereign and a man with a mission. This was followed by striking of coins bearing the name of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh on the pattern of the coin struck by Banda Singh Bahadur in C.E. 1711. The climax of this historic event was firing of salute from the ramparts of Lahore fort and Ranjit Singh's ride on an elephant through the jubilant crowds of the city showering gold and silver coins. In the evening the city was illumined with oil lamps and there was a rich display of firework which marked the opening of an era for the people of the Punjab.

Ranjit Singh gradually welded Punjab into a state, the geo-political situation of which made it a state in a special sense. Ranjit Singh found the country he occupied in a state of decay. The area under cultivation had declined due to frequent visitations of the invading armies. The irrigation system, wells as well as canals, had ceased to work due to disuse, neglect and non-maintenance. The urban centres had also declined due to chaotic conditions and absence of efficient government. Lahore and Multan no longer remained the cen-

tres of trade as they used to be during the Mughal times. Ranjit Singh had virtually to revive each one of the activities of his people. Consequently, towns like Multan, Sialkot, Gujranwala, Peshawar became major centres. Amritsar became the largest city and biggest commercial centre of the kingdom. Political stability given by Ranjit Singh encouraged urbanisation and as many as 120 towns are known to have flourished in the entire kingdom. More land was brought under plough, digging of wells was encouraged and for marketing the agricultural produce separate markets were laid out in the towns. In fact Ranjit Singh had sensed the on-set of modern age and he prepared Punjab to face the demands of modernisation. Education was considered a private enterprise but the state played a role by funding and patronising it. A large number of *Madrsas*, *Pathshalas* and *Gurmukhi Vidyals* flourished during this period and Ranjit Singh gave them liberal grants. There were centres for higher religious learning which brought out exegesis of *Gurbani* and translation of scriptures in various languages. Amritsar developed as a centre of learning like Benaras. Batala also came up as a centre of Islamic Studies where students from Persia and Arabia came to have lessons in all branches of learning. Ranjit Singh was keen to start an English school at Lahore but the Christian missionaries from Ludhiana who were contacted for this purpose insisted that *Bible* instruction must form a part of the curriculum for such a school.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh, his father, Mahan Singh, and grandfather, Charhat Singh were conscious that the traditional Sikh tactics of warfare had become archaic. Charhat Singh took interest in the modernisation of matchlocks and Mahan Singh conquered Kotli Ahangran near Sialkot which was a centre for manufacture of firearms. Ranjit Singh observed keenly that apart from modernisation of arms, training and formation of troops was equally necessary to face the powerful neighbours on both the sides of his kingdom. Therefore he recruited European officers demobilized after the battle of Waterloo. In the erstwhile Sikh combatant formations of Sikh Misl, the soldiers had the liberty to change their *misl*s and the leaders. Ranjit Singh did away with this practice and insisted upon maintenance of discipline despite resistance from the ranks. He tried to maintain a delicate balance between the traditional fighting forces and the new formations by creating three wings : The Fauj-i-Khas (the elite force), the *Fauj-i-Qawaid* (trained forces), *Fauj-i-Be-Qawaid* (the traditional untrained force). By doing so, he created an army organisation that always looked unto him for leadership. However, they were still a long way to go to serve as standing army of the state and this proved to be their major weakness. The *Karkhanas* for manufacture of canons and other firearms were maintained by the state. Lehna Singh Majithia, a genius in astronomy and mathematics, was put in charge of designing and manufacture of firearms. Ranjit Singh took personal interest in upgradation of artillery and cleverly used this opportunity to re-

strict the manufacture and possession of arms by the common people. However, it is noteworthy that no regulation was promulgated in this regard as it must have been resented by the Sikhs who had love for possession of arms.

As stated above, Ranjit Singh was responsive to modernisation trends, infiltrating into his kingdom from beyond the Sutlej and through his own European employees under the influence of Industrial Revolution. Ranjit Singh held long sessions with Allard, Ventura and Avitabile to gather information regarding the conditions obtaining in Europe as to the state of development and welfare of the people. He allowed Avitabile to remodel Wazirabad (presently in Gujranwala district of Pakistan), a strategic town on the bank of river Chenab. Consequently, this town came to have a straight long *bazar* which served as hub of the town, and broad and clean streets with good houses. Like Babur he loved gardens and encouraged his officers to lay gardens in the areas under their control. Hari Singh Nalwa's love for gardens and fruit trees is well known. He transformed the face of Gujranwala which was greatly admired by Baron Hugel who stayed there for a few days.

When Ranjit Singh took over the affairs of the Punjab, there was no administrative organisation worth the name. The edifice of the Mughal administration had crumbled fully under the weight of Afghan invasions and the Sikh resistance to authority. In fact, the Sikh *Misldars* who occupied the entire territory falling within the boundaries of *Suba-i-Lahore* and *Sarkar-i-Sirhind* had established a new system over the ruins of the old. But many a time they had to employ civil and revenue officials who had earlier served under the Mughals. In this way some of the basic ingredients of the Mughal administrative structure survived in the new system. What is important to be taken note of is that there was no conscious effort on the part of Sikh *Misldars* or Maharaja Ranjit Singh to revive the Mughal administrative organisation. In fact, it did not fit into the ideology and the system on the strength of which they had fought and seized power. For the Sikhs, the sovereign was *Akal* who was creator, sustainer or destroyer, all combined into one, infallible was only the Guru (*Abhul Guru Kartar*) - hence no divine right of the King. The position of the ruler as it came to Ranjit Singh was by the grace of the Guru. That is why he chose to rule in the name of the Guru and his Khalsa and described himself as Ranjit nagara (an emblem of royalty) to Guru Gobind Singh. He struck coins in the name of the Guru because he regarded himself as a humble servant of Guru Nanak and this is amply clear from a popular legend. Ranjit Singh took care to see that he remained closer to the ethos of the movement and the revolution that had brought him to the fore. His journey from *Singh Sahib*, *Sarkar* and *Raja* to the position of a Maharaja did not start with assumption of titles. Epithets gradually came to him, in fact with the approval of his people. In reality he hesitated to wear emblems of royalty but his people and the painters loved to see him attired with

these emblems. In fact Ranjit Singh never exercised the powers of a Mughal emperor. Power flowed from him for the welfare of the common people. He never hesitated to reprimand his officers like Avitabile and Jamadar Khushal Singh who sometimes tended to be oppressive towards the subjects under their charge.

Ranjit Singh started afresh with the task of organisation of government by appointing Bhawani Das, a fugitive revenue official of Shah Shujah of Kabul. Bhawani Das's initial assignment was maintenance of accounts of income and expenditure. Gradually it developed into a full-fledged finance department that became the backbone of the entire administration. The names of the departments deciphered from the huge collection of *Khalsa Darbar Records* rarely match with the functions and names of the departments of Mughal administration listed by J.N. Sarkar. In fact, the government of Ranjit Singh functioned in accordance with the needs and aspiration of the people. The pivot of this organisation was the Maharaja himself who issued *parwanas* (orders) in the names of his officers concerning all matters of governance. The courtiers or ministers as we may call them were not assigned specific duties either on permanent or periodical basis and they did not have particular departments under their charge. Their influence and confidence with the Maharaja determined their status and dignity in the *Darbar*. Similarly, the provincial and local administration was organised afresh wherein the functions and duties of the governor (*nazim*) were not clearly defined. Basically, the *nazim* was required to maintain law and order in the province, collect revenues and administer justice according to the customary law. There was no fixed tenure for the *nazim*. Lahore was administered as a cosmopolitan city with an administrator at the head. The city was divided in four quarters and there were many *thanedars* and *mohalladars* besides the *kotwal* above them. The *Kardar* functioned as pivot of the administration of a *pargana* and he had multifarious duties to perform besides, policing.

It should be noted from the above that Ranjit Singh's administration kept pace with the needs of the times. He progressively introduced the system of payment of salaries in cash both in the military, civil and judicial sectors. By continuing payment of endowments to establishments of all religions practised by the subjects of his state and holding back the idea of declaring the religion he himself professed as state religion, he introduced an element of modernisation in his administrative system wherein co-existence and tolerance were to be the central features. He possessed the vision to assess the strategic and commercial importance of territories included in his kingdom from Ladakh to Sind. He cast covetous eyes on Sind but was out-manoeuvred. Still he signed the Indus Navigation Treaty (1832) and the Supplementary Indus Treaty (1834) which secured the best possible terms for the merchants of his kingdom and opened the traditional trade routes along Kangra-Kulu region down to Bahawalpur-

Multan. Duties were fixed on all the merchandise in transit up and down, thus minimising the chances of smuggling and sea piracies. He even tried to monopolise the supplies of raw silk from Tibet for the benefit of shawl-wool industry of Kashmir and encouraged Allard and Ventura to arrange the export of Kashmir shawls through the sea ports of Bombay and Calcutta.

The Maharaja always kept himself posted with the developments in Europe so as to keep his policy towards the British under constant review. Like Bismarck, he not only tried to keep the road to Paris open and the passage to St. Pittsburgh repaired but also tried to reach out to Kathmandu (Nepal). Through his own indigenous and earthly gestures, he often asserted his sovereign status when the British missions visited his court, despite the fact that such an exercise was always found irksome by diplomats like Captain Wade and Burnes.

Ranjit Singh was decidedly the most picturesque figure among those Chiefs of Indian sub-continent who rose to power and carved their way to eminence on the ruins of once great Mughal Empire. One must also not lose sight of the fact that geo-political importance of the territory that he came to occupy and the Sikh movement through which he made his way to power symbolised such landmarks in history of South Asia that made forty years of Ranjit Singh's regime the opening of an era that shaped the course of history of the whole region within a century of the decline of Ranjit Singh's kingdom.

## GIANI GIAN SINGH'S PLACE IN PUNJAB HISTORY

Sukhdial Singh \*

Gian Singh lived from 1822 to 1921 surviving for almost a century. He was an eye-witness to the rise and fall of Sikh Empire under Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his successor. He had the privilege of seeing Maharaja Ranjit Singh from close quarters since it was a part of his duty to recite *Sukhmani Sahib* to the Maharaja.<sup>1</sup> He was also a contemporary of the rulers of Patiala and Nabha states namely Maharajas Narendra Singh, Mohendra Singh and Bhupendra Singh and Maharaja Heera Singh and Ripudaman Singh respectively.

He also spent sometime in the force of Kanwar Nau Nihal Singh. After some time he shifted his services to Patiala by joining the army of Maharaja Karm Singh of Patiala. He participated in the First Anglo-Sikh War from the side of the Patiala State which extended its support to the British.

As he was himself a Nirmala, Gian Singh contributed a lot towards the establishment of Nirmal Panchayati Akhara at Patiala in 1862 at the initiative of Maharaja Narendra Singh. Pandit Tara Singh Narotam, the chief of the *akhara*, was his teacher. Gian Singh commenced writing his works after the establishment of this centre of the Nirmalas. Maharaja Bhupendra Singh of Patiala regarded his scholarship.

Maharaja Bhupendra Singh established a Sikh History Society, Patiala in 1916 and sanctioned a sum of Rs. 1,37,000 for the publication of his works. He also earned name and fame by the service rendered to Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha. Orders issued from time to time from the rulers of Patiala, Nabha and the Chief of Bagrian House give testimony to the fact that he was respected by these quarters for his scholarship and the contribution made towards exploring Sikh history.

Gian Singh's writing belong to the last decades of the 19th Century and the early decades of the 20th Century. These figured in the educational curriculum of the *deras* and *madarsas* of the period. Before him, Sikh history had mostly been written in Persian and English which apparently did not have much utility

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1. Sant Inder Singh Chakkarvarti's article, "Giani Ji Di Vans Prampra Jan Kul Da Pichhware" in *Giani Gian Singh Adhyan*, Jullundhar, 1960, p. 21.

for the preliminary Sikh educational institutions. Nonetheless, Sikh history was interpreted according to the subjective views of the writers writing in Persian and English. Muslim, Hindu and English writers wrote from their own point of view. Perhaps, it was the main reason why Gian Singh commenced writing on the Sikhs and his writings represent the Sikh view-point.

Gian Singh has described the Sikh Gurus in terms quite adequate for revered religious personalities whereas Persian and English writers before him, represented the Gurus as ordinary persons. Gian Singh's description is full of Sikh sentiments albeit, the aforesaid writers depict no such feelings. His description reflects sympathy for the Sikh rulers or Chiefs whereas writers like Major Carmichael Smyth, Cunningham and Griffin take them as subordinate to the British authority. Naturally the writings of Gian Singh bear the Sikh shade but the British and Persian writers reflect their individual view-points. Hence Gian Singh's writings should be assessed in the light of these arguments.

As a matter of fact, Gian Singh's writings represent the beginning of writing Sikh history in Gurmukhi prose although he has also produced a major work entitled *Sri Guru Panth Parkash* in verse describing the history of the Sikhs from 1469 to 1870.<sup>2</sup> Upto the times of Gian Singh writers, writing history in Gurmukhi script, took pride in adopting poetic style. This is the main reason why writers like Kesar Singh Chhiber and Rattan Singh Bhangu preferred writing their accounts in poetry though they had no proficiency in writing in verse. Had they attempted to write in prose, their style would have, perhaps, been more appropriate and lucid. Gian Singh chooses a fresh and novel path by leaving the traditional style and expressing himself in prose. It is to be noted that his description in prose is impressive and expression more clear. His style in prose is a good model for a student of literature as well.

Gian Singh was fully aware of his contemporary writings. Mohammad Latif's *History of the Punjab* and Gian Singh's *Twarikh Guru Khalsa*, Volume I, were written simultaneously in the year 1891.<sup>3</sup> He was aware of Latif's work although he was ignorant of English language yet he has written a critical appraisal of Latif's *History of the Punjab* in his works, *Twarikh Shamsher Khalsa* and *Twarikh Raj Khalsa*.

Similarly, Gian Singh was also acquainted with the books written on Sikh history by the British. It is surprising to note that inspite of his ignorance of English language, his works reflect his thorough acquaintance with these

2. It was first published from Amritsar in 1880 in lithograph.

3. It was published by Buta Singh's Press. Sialkot in lithograph in 1891.

works. It appears from the references occurring in his works that he had employed some staff which constantly equipped him with such information in a systematic way. This is the reason why he had attained a specific position by way of writing a detailed account of the Sikhs, not achieved by his predecessors.

Gian Singh's period was the period of Singh Sabha Movement when its advocates chose to get the Sikh history written from the origins of the Sikh faith. He being one of the founders of the movement commenced writing the history of the Sikhs. It goes to his credit that he did not accept the influence of any group of the Singh Sabha and always stressed his own view-point.

Though Gian Singh's description of the Sikh Gurus is full of myths and legends yet his writings are more historical and objective than those of his predecessor Sikh writers. However, the mission of Gian Singh was to applaud the Sikh Gurus. He made use of the prevalent legends and myths in order to praise the Gurus. By doing so he, of course, at times deviated from the principles of writing objective history. But the fact remains that on the whole his account of Sikh Gurus is informative and logical. Resultantly, it has been used with merit by the later writers.

Chronology used by Gian Singh throughout his works requires to be compared with the contemporary and near contemporary works. Thus, one has to be alert in using the chronology given by him. It is quite in the fitness of things to mention here that the chronology given by Gian Singh pertaining to Guru period favourably compares with that of Sarup Das Bhalla's *Mahma Parkash*. Since Sarup Das Bhalla is silent about the dates of events of the life and activities of Guru Gobind Singh, Gian Singh seems to have relied on *Bhatt Vahis*, though he has not made mention of them. It appears as if during his travels to a number of places in search of the history of Gurdwaras, he might have come in contact with such elements as had influenced the writers of the *valhis*.

In his account of Banda Singh Bahadur,<sup>4</sup> he has, of course been a victim to the prejudiced Persian writers expressing fanatical views which cannot be considered objective in any respect. Gian Singh has, nevertheless given an imaginary shape and form to the rift between *Tat Khalsa* and *Bandai Khalsa* which is in no way objective. As a matter of fact, he has based his account on the writings of his predecessor Rattan Singh Bhangu. Bhangu, being not a contemporary of Banda Singh Bahadur, has written this portion of his work on the hearsay and thus it cannot be said to be an authentic one. We may safely say

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4. See Twarikh Shamsheer Khalsa (Lithograph Edition), Sialkot, 1892.

that the portion of Banda Singh Bahadur is the weakest part of Gian Singh's *Shamsher Khalsa*.

Gian Singh has given a good account of the activities of the Sikhs after the martyrdom of Banda Singh Bahadur to the last invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali. The information provided by him is decidedly useful for the students of history. He has established new milestones in describing the history of Sikh *misl*s. He has acquired the required information from the successors of the *misdars*. Gian Singh has again at times presented the activities of the *misl*s from the Sikh point of view, whereas Persian and English writers have tried to exploit the situation. He has tried to trace the rise of the *misl*s from the Sikh-Mughal and Sikh-Afghan struggle in his book *Twarikh Raj Khalsa*, published in 1894. It goes to his credit that he has arranged to record the statements of the old people of the *misl* period which has gone a long way in making his account of the *misdari* period authentic and useful. He has, at times, condemned the account of the British writers pertaining to Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Although he took part from the side of pro-British forces but his description reflects Sikh feeling and sentiments while assessing the situation of the Lahore Darbar before the commencement of the First Anglo-Sikh War. He comments that the chiefs of the Lahore Darbar were unable to cope up with the situation. He is the first Sikh writer who states that it was not appropriate for the Sikhs to wage a war against the British and builds up his own arguments.

Whereas Griffin's *Punjab Chiefs* is a well known work about the Chiefs of the Punjab. Gian Singh has carved out a place for himself among the Punjabi writers by writing a useful account of prominent Sikh Chieftains. His account of these families differ from that of Griffin who has considered these Chieftains as subordinate to the British authorities. On the contrary, Gian Singh has treated those families as the founder of Sikh political power.

The main feature of Gian Singh's writings which distinguished him from his contemporary writers is that he is the first to work on the Sikh sects. As a matter of fact, his account surpasses almost all so far as the contemporary sects like Kukas and Gulab Dasias are concerned. Some of the sects being of individual and regional nature have not attracted the attention of writers like Ibbetson, Rose, Temple etc. Credit again goes to Gian Singh for delving on these sects and explaining their importance. Prior to Gian Singh's writings Sikh sects were not taken up by any writer systematically in historical perspective.

His work on the Nirmalas entitled *Nirmal Panth Pardipka*<sup>5</sup> is well known.

5. Gian Singh, *Nirmal Panth Pardipka* (lithograph). Sialkot. 1894.

Though the basis of his writing is the concocted stories yet his account is more useful particularly in the context of statements taken up from the contemporary Nirmalas. His account of a number of topics concerning the Nirmalas is very significant. For instance, his account of the establishment of Nirmala *akharas*, the conflict of the Nirmalas with the priests of Takhat Sri Hazur Sahib Nanded, the relations of the Nirmalas with the Sikh rulers etc. have their own historical significance. It goes without saying that almost all the writers writing on the Nirmalas subsequent to Gian Singh's writing have used his works with merit.

His account on the Kuka Movement has gained popularity because of its contemporary and objective nature owing to its lengthy details, Kukas have got his account concerning them printed by themselves under the title of *Namdhari Sikhs : A Brief Account as narrated by Gian Singh*. Kukas considered it their sacred duty to keep this booklet with them. With the exception of the account of the Nihangs, he has dealt with every sect in an objective manner. Gian Singh does not speak in favour of Nihangs and their way of living. This might have been due to the conflict of Nihangs at Takhat Sri Nanded Sahib in 1875 where some casualties took place on the side of Nirmalas.

He made a survey of all the historical Sikh Gurdwaras in the country by personally visiting various places, talking to people and collecting useful information in this connection. The information was duly submitted to his teacher Pandit Tara Singh Narotam who was obliged to incorporate the reports submitted by Gian Singh from time to time in his prominent work entitled *Sri Guru Tirath Sangreh*.<sup>6</sup> His work *Gurdham Sangreh* is based on such survey reports which were later on elaborated by him. In this way Gian Singh is the first who commenced the tradition of writing his account by means of personally visiting the holy places.

So far as Nirmala Sect is concerned, Gian Singh is the first who wrote detailed history which was followed by later writers on the Nirmalas.

Gian Singh also deserves credit for writing an objective history of the House of Bagrian. Gian Singh's account surpasses the later writings in so far as objectivity and authenticity of facts is concerned.

His account, of course, contains certain discrepancies but notwithstanding the shortcomings, his description of history is useful and has been used by the later writers with merit.

We may safely say that Gian Singh has attained a prominent position among the Gurmukhi writers by not only working in prose bringing clearly to the subject on Sikh history but also by digging fresh grounds in various respects.

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6. Pandit Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirath Sangreh*, Temple Press, Ambala.

## SUCCESSORS OF RAO TULA RAM : A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THEIR ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION (1863 TO 1947 A.D.)

S.K. Manak \*

The present paper is an attempt to critically analyse the role and contribution of the successors of Rao Tula Ram, the ruler of erstwhile state of Rewari.<sup>1</sup> Rao Tula Ram (1825-63 A.D.) has been vividly described as the 'Hero of 1857'<sup>2</sup>. He fought valiantly against the mighty British in the Revolt of 1857 and also carried on the struggle against the British in India and abroad even after the Revolt was successfully suppressed. But his successors<sup>3</sup> viz. Rao Yudhishter Singh (1857-89), Rao Balbir Singh (1884-1941) and Rao Birender Singh (Born 1921) who remained at the helm of affairs of Rewari from 1863 to 1947 could not muster up enough courage and strength to oppose the British for the injustice being done to the people of Ahirwal. After 1857, the British treated Rewari as a belligerent state, declared Ahirs as rebels,<sup>4</sup> and despite the fact that general pardon was assured by the Royal Proclamation of 1858,<sup>5</sup> the British officers, right from the level of Divisional Commissioner to the lowest level functionary in the area, hated and looked down upon the people of Ahirwal as the ones who sided with the enemies of the British in the Revolt and attempted to overthrow the British Raj.<sup>6</sup> This feeling among the British bureaucracy persisted for a long time with the result that the area became the victim of neglect and abuse and very little development in socio-economic and political fields took place during this period. Thus, the whole of Ahirwal became a

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1. Rewari at present is a district headquarter and an important cultural centre of Ahirwal. It is situated in Southern Haryana.
2. K. C. Yadav, *Rao Tula Ram - A Hero of 1857*. Delhi, 1979.
3. Rao, Man Singh, *Yadav-Ahir Kuldeepika* (Transcribed in Hindi from Urdu by Rao Jaswant Singh). Rao Tula Ram Smarak Samiti, Rewari, n.d., pp. 314-23.
4. K.C. Yadav, *Undoing the Bondage : A Study of the life of Rao Tula Ram*, Jullundur, 1975, p. 41.
5. S. Gopal, *British Policy in India, 1858-1905*, Orient Longman Ltd., 1984, p. 3.
6. K.C. Yadav, *Ahirwal : History and Culture* (Hindi), Haryana Historical Society, 2000, p. 104.

backward region, the impact of which is visible even today.<sup>7</sup>

The questions addressed to in this paper are: If Rao Tula Ram had the courage and conviction to rise in arms against the mighty British and challenge their authority, then why did his successors fail to oppose even the injustice being done to the people of Ahirwal? Why did they remain loyal to the British? And, why did they continue to toe the British up to 1947 and did not even participate in the national struggle for freedom?

To find answers to the above questions, one has to carefully surf through the circumstances that prevailed in India, in general, and in Delhi region, particularly, both prior to 1857 and, of course, after the Revolt, right up to 1947.

The politico-socio-economic scenario during the first half of the nineteenth century was very much different from that of the latter half of the same century. The situation also changed much rapidly during the first two quarters of the twentieth century. The paramountcy of the British over the whole of India was complete by 1849 A.D. when the last independent Sikh state of Punjab was annexed by Lord Dalhousie. The Marathas, the Rajputs, the Mughals, the Afghans – all had come under the British umbrella and their authority was completely annihilated. The only exception was some of the princely states, which though had been subjugated and compelled to dance to the British tunes, were yet maintaining their false prestige and a little bit of local authority because the people of these states still held their rulers in high esteem.<sup>8</sup> This gave rise to the feeling of kingship and being an effective ruler, as in the case of Rao Tula Ram.<sup>9</sup> So was the case with some other disgruntled princes whose states had been forcibly confiscated by the British either through the 'Doctrine of Lapse' or otherwise. The loss of rulership, perpetuity Jagirs, pensions, prestige and sense of deprivation ultimately incited a number of princes and rulers to combine

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7. Southern Haryana comprising the districts of Rewari, Mohindergarh, Jhajjar and some parts of Gurgaon, when compared with other districts of the state, are still considered to be very backward, in terms of infrastructural facilities such as education, roads, railways, irrigation, health, etc. For detailed comparative data see Haryana Statistical Abstract, 1998-99.

8. The lack of proper means of transport and communication as well as vast distance from the central areas lent considerable leverage of local authority in favour of the local feudatories.

9. *N.A.I. Mutiny Papers*, Bundle 34, Document 12.

their resources together and challenge the British authority in 1857.<sup>10</sup>

The administrative arrangement made by the East India Company in the pre-Revolt period was more or less on Mughal lines. The old Subah rule was maintained. The British Resident acted almost like a Governor of the Mughal Subha. He was vested with all the three types of powers, namely : judicial, executive and financial. In 1819, for administrative convenience, Haryana region was divided into three divisions : North, South and Central. Ahirwal formed a part of South Division with its headquarters at Gurgaon. Each Division was governed by one Assistant Resident. Later on in 1834 some changes were made to make the administration more effective but the basic structure of the administration remained as it is up to 1857.<sup>11</sup> This type of administration of the company was fraught with the whims and rhymes of the officers that governed the area. The British officers acted more according to their likes and dislikes and less on the British law that was not very clearly defined by that time.

The Socio-economic conditions of the people of Ahirwal region during the Company's rule were also far from being satisfactory. The Company was merely interested in extorting revenue which was generally more than fifty percent of the land produce,<sup>12</sup> and it did very little to improve the living standards of the people or to provide infrastructural facilities like roads, schools, health, etc. The word of the Commissioner or Resident or even of lower level British officer was the law. Many offenders of petty crimes or even innocent people were awarded stringent punishments like life imprisonment and that too without following due process of law.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, the conditions during the first half of the nineteenth Century as briefly discussed above, proved to be the germination ground of discontent and disaffection which was exhibited in the outbreak of 1857. The people of Ahirwal

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10. Prior to 1857, there was a large number of revolts and cases of dissidence in various parts of Haryana. For example, Chhachhrauli (Jagadhri) Rising (1809), Rania (Sirsa) Revolt (1818), Peasants Revolt (1824) in Rohtak, Gurgaon and Hissar, Jind Revolt (1834), Loharu Revolt (1834-35), Kaithal Uprising (1843), Ladwa Revolt (1845) etc., occurred during the first half of the nineteenth century. The incidence of all these cases clearly indicates that the people of Haryana like several other parts of India were opposing and flouting the British authority quite often. Ahirwal was also engulfed with the wave of resentment and anger against the British by the time the storm was gathering to blow in 1857.

11. K.C. Yadav, Ahirwal, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

12. K.C. Yadav, *Modern Haryana*, New Delhi, 2002, p. 66.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 64.

led by Rao Tula Ram created lot of troubles for the Britishers. They however ultimately failed to achieve their objective. The pertinent point to be made here is not the success or the failure of the endeavours of Rao Tula Ram, but what matters is the attempt that he and his associates made to expel the foreigners.

Now it would be quite desirable to discuss the conditions of post 1857 period during which the successors of Rao Tula Ram lived. After the Revolt had failed to achieve its objective, the British became the sole master of the land and held complete sway over the entire country. The rule of East India Company gave way to the direct take over of the administration by the British Crown. The Company was banished for good. The Governor-General was henceforth to be credited as Viceroy since he was entrusted with the task of acting as an agent of the British Crown. He was now two-in-one; Governor General and Viceroy. From a British colony, India became a part of the British Empire. To be apt, the control of the British administration over Indian affairs became more stringent and direct than ever.

The British having severely bitten by the bug of 1857 became highly conscious and alert. The intelligence department was completely overhauled and refurbished. The British now no more trusted the people who had participated in the Revolt. They rather penalized and punished those states that fought against them or even had sided with the rebels. Ahirwal was one such region that had not only helped Bahadur Shah Zaffar both financially and militarily<sup>14</sup> in the hour of need but also fought pitched battle at Narnaul against the British.<sup>15</sup> This cost the Ahirwal very heavily and the region had to reel under the British oppression through several decades thereafter. All developmental activities were intentionally neglected, no appointments were made from the region, not even general recruitment in the army was made from the Ahirwal. No infrastructural facilities like schools, roads, railways, health, rivers etc. were developed. As a result, the people of Ahirwal became very backward and even today lag much behind many of the developed areas of the state.

Ahirwal earlier formed an important part of North-West Province, i.e. Modern U.P.<sup>16</sup> But in February, 1858, it was transferred to Punjab alongwith other parts of Haryana. The Punjab Commissioner Sir John Lawrence for administrative convenience divided Haryana areas into two divisions : Delhi

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14. Laxmi Narayan, 'Rao Tula Ram and his Successors', Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, M.D. University, Rohtak, 1998, p. 131.

15. Rao Man Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 310.

16. K.C. Yadav, *Ahirwal, op. cit.*, p. 85.

and Hissar. Ahirwal became a Tehsil of district Gurgaon in Delhi Division. This arrangement with slight variations and adjustments continued up to 1947.<sup>17</sup>

As a result of the direct rule of the British Government the people came into direct contact with the rulers. Having acquired some knowledge of the English language they now became acquainted with the views of Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Dickens, Locke, Rousseau, Voltaire etc. They could now easily analyse the causes of their backwardness and thus understood the real motives of the policies of economic exploitation and "Divide and Rule" etc. This understanding ultimately gave rise to the feeling of nationalism and political consciousness. The result was the founding of many local, regional and national level organizations, the most prominent among them being the Indian National Congress (1885). This organization soon established its branches all over India and a large number of people from all walks of life enrolled themselves as its members. As is well known, the Indian National Congress soon became the chief vehicle of Indian National Movement and it successfully espoused the cause of Indian freedom. The people of Ahirwal also did not lag behind. Bhagwan Dass, Banwari Lal, Goverdhan Dass etc. were some notable persons of Rewari who took active part in Indian National Movement.<sup>18</sup> The wave of political awareness and self-consciousness made a lot of difference in the thinking and working of both the rulers and the ruled everywhere. Ahirwal couldn't be the exception.

The economic conditions prevailing in Ahirwal during post-Revolt period were of course far from being satisfactory,<sup>19</sup> but not as bad as in the pre-Revolt period. Though major profession of the people of Ahirwal continued to be farming, the trade and industry had also started making inroads. The Government also passed certain laws like Land Alienation Act (1900) and Punjab Relief of Indebtedness Act (1904). These measures were adopted to save farmers from the clutches of money lenders and to improve farming conditions. In Ahirwal, especially in Gurgaon, some new experiments to improve farming were also made in 1920-21.<sup>20</sup> New techniques and scientific methods, which were developed as a result of Industrial and Agrarian Revolutions in Europe, were also put into practice here and they yielded very positive results. This is not to suggest that the people of Ahirwal had now become affluent and had enough to

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17. *Ibid.*, p. 103.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 114.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 110.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

spare, but it is certain that the process of economic development had commenced.

In social field too, there was a noticeable difference between the conditions prevailing before and after the Revolt. Whereas we don't find any big social reform movement during the Company's rule in Haryana, the advent and spread of Arya Samaj and Sanatan Dharam Sabhas during the latter part of the nineteenth century lend credence to the point. Even there was the establishment of Muslim Associations like Anjuman Islamia and Central Mohammedan Association (1877) with a view to improve the social condition of the Muslims of Ahirwal. The establishment of some new schools in the area also helped in spreading education and improving the rate of literacy. Not only this, the British Govt. also took steps to lay down new rail lines and roads connecting Rewari to other important towns of the country.<sup>21</sup>

Having comparatively described politico-socio-economic conditions prevailing in the country, in general, and Ahirwal, in particular, during 1803-57 and 1858-1947 periods, it is now easier to find answers to the questions raised in the beginning of this paper.

As regards the first question that the successors of Rao Tula Ram did not challenge the British authority and failed to oppose the injustice being done to the people of Ahirwal, it is on record that Rao Tula Ram's estate had been confiscated by the British immediately after they suppressed the Revolt in 1857 and Tula Ram was forced to hide himself in exile.<sup>22</sup> His attempts to obtain help from the rulers of Rajasthan and Gwalior also proved futile. Even his request to the British to pardon him was turned down.<sup>23</sup> Compelled by the circumstances, he left the country for Iran and Afghanistan where he breathed his last at the young age of 38 on September 23, 1863.<sup>24</sup>

Rao Tula Ram's son Yudhishter Singh was just six years old when he died. The guardians of Yudhishter Singh were naturally more worried and concerned about his well-being and upbringing rather than attending to the political needs.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, the British constantly kept a close watch on the activities of the Ahirs. They were now not prepared to leave any stone unturned to see what was brewing underneath. Yudhishter Singh and his

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21. For further details see *Ibid.*, pp. 103-114.

22. Foreign Department, March 1858, File 26/30, *NAI*, New Delhi.

23. Military Department, Delhi Division Records, 1858, File No. 5, *MSA*, Panchkula.

24. Rao Man Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 163.

compatriots were continuously harassed by the British so as not to allow them to harbour any ill-will against the British.<sup>26</sup>

By the time Yudhishter Singh became major and took over the reins of his estates, the British had established their complete control not only on the country's main land but also on all the princely states. Their crime investigation and intelligence departments had penetrated deep into the far flung areas, especially the 'rebel areas', and there was no scope for the petty feudals to muster enough support and pose a challenge to the British authority. The British infact had reduced most of the rulers to the position of a mere puppet with all the pulling strings in their own hands. The rulers were now dancing to the tunes set by the British. So much so that most of them were often found vying with one another to toe the British authorities and making efforts to prove their utmost loyalty to them. Rao Yudhishter Singh and his successor Rao Balbir Singh also followed the same course. They thought it better and, perhaps, the only prudent way to flatter and please the British in every possible manner so as to keep them in good humour.<sup>27</sup> Winning of favours, titles and medals from the British now became their main aim and target. Though both of them remained somewhat active in social and religious fields too but they derived more comfort and solace in expressing their loyalty to the British.<sup>28</sup> Rao Yudhishter Singh did his best to prove his loyalty by supplying recruits to the British army from Ahirwal. When his earlier attempts to get his men recruited in the army failed he felt upset and tense so much so that he became a heart patient.<sup>29</sup> He felt relieved only when he succeeded second time.<sup>30</sup> He was overjoyed and distributed sweets when he was conferred the title of Risaldar and Honorary Magistrate of Rewari.<sup>31</sup>

Now if we analyse the situation from an opposite angle, i.e., had Yudhishter Singh opposed the British and revolted against them what would have happened? Surely, he would have either been imprisoned or put to death, since those were the times when the British could not take chances and any dissidence on the part of the local rulers would have been crushed with iron

26. Swami Sudhanand Yogi. *Yadav Itihas*. Pataudi, 1989. p. 357.

27. J.N. Yadav. *Yadavas Through the Ages*, Delhi. 1992. p. 132; and Rao Man Singh. *op cit.*, p. 164.

28. J.N. Yadav. *op. cit.*, p. 164.

29. Rao Man Singh. *op. cit.*, p. 168.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 169.

31. Subedar Vaid Shiv Dhan Singh. *Yadav Parivar*, Kosli. n.d., p. 122.

hand.<sup>32</sup> But is that the sufficient and satisfactory explanation for the loyalty of the Ahir leaders towards the British? No, it can't be. Had it been so, then how can the existence of underground and secret militant movements like Ghadar etc. of early twentieth century be justified? The position is evenly balanced. Rao Yudhishter Singh was young and immature. He was not properly adept in state diplomacy. He had no sufficient resources. He was constantly surrounded by the British intelligence and vigilance departmental officers. The British officers were in complete control of the situation. No other ruler of the country at that point of time was raising his head any more. Then how could the lone inheritor of a petty state of Rewari rise in arms against the mighty British?

The second pertinent point to be taken up here is that : why did not both Yudhishter Singh and Rao Balbir Singh lodge a protest to the British for the injustice being done to the people of Ahirwal? Were all the Ahirs rebels and deserved harsh treatment only for the reason that some of them stood with Rao Tula Ram in the Revolt?

The fact is that the British had so many options. They could get their recruits from other areas very easily. They got Sikhs and Gurkhas recruited in large numbers, so much so that Punjab came to be known as "the Sword of India."<sup>33</sup> Moreover, after the Revolt in 1857, they had decided to reduce the strength of Indian soldiers in British army to about fifty percent so as to meet any eventuality in future more effectively.

Besides, Rao Yudhishter Singh and Rao Balbir Singh tried their level best, though in their own humble way, to get the maximum number of Ahirs recruited in the British army. They also succeeded in their efforts to some extent. But they could not persuade the British to introduce developmental works in Ahirwal in a big way. Except the sporadic successful efforts like establishing of a high school or constructing a small road and rail line, no other infrastructural facility was provided to this region right up to 1947. The overall condition of Rewari and surrounding areas up to 1947 remained pathetic.<sup>34</sup> The present economic backwardness of this region has its roots in the policies of the British

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32. The examples of Nahar Singh of Ballabgarh and Ahmad Ali of Farrukhnagar were at hand. They were hanged in Chandni Chowk, Delhi, on charges of dissidence and treason without making any proper enquiry or giving chance to them to defend themselves. K.C. Yadav, *The Revolt of 1857 in Haryana*, Delhi, 1977, pp. 93-100.

33. S.P. Shukla, *India's Freedom Struggle and the Role of Haryana*, New Delhi, 1985, p. 31.

34. K.C. Yadav, *Rewari – Itihas ke Jharokhe Se* (Hindi), Haryana Historical Society, Gurgaon, 1999, p. 37.

that they pursued during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Now we take up the last question : Why did successors of Tula Ram toe the British line and not participated in the Indian National Movement?

The answer obviously lies in the political scenario prevailing in the country during this period. Rao Yudhishter Singh died in 1889. By that time there was no wave of nationalism as such in Ahirwal. Whatsoever little it existed that was mainly due to the Arya Samaj and the Sanatan Dharam Sabha.<sup>35</sup> The Indian National Congress had though been founded at Bombay in 1885 but it had no branch in Ahirwal by the end of the nineteenth century. Lala Murlidhar and Munshi Jawala Prashad of Ambala had attended the first session of the Indian National Congress at Bombay.<sup>36</sup> They also established its branch at Ambala city in 1886.<sup>37</sup> But the Indian National Congress had not become popular in other parts of Haryana especially Ahirwal during the lifetime of Rao Yudhishter Singh.

Rao Balbir Singh lived up to 1941 and during his period, the major freedom movements like Swadeshi Movement (1905-11), Non-cooperation Movement (1920-22) and Civil Disobedience Movement (1930-34) were organized. In fact the foundations of Indian freedom were very much laid during the first four decades of the twentieth century and the freedom struggle was then at its peak. There is also sufficient evidence to show that many people of Haryana including those from Ahirwal took active part in various freedom movements.<sup>38</sup> But Rao Balbir Singh did not contribute at all in any of the movements. There is no documentary evidence to show that he took part in any freedom movement. He preferred contesting various elections to the Punjab Legislative Council and also won in 1920, 1926 and 1930.<sup>39</sup> He was a regular member of Hindu Maha Sabha and devoted more time to the social welfare activities like maintenance of *Goshala* and educational institutions.

Instead of participating in the freedom movement, Rao Balbir Singh helped the British in providing thousands of recruits for their army on various occasions, and he was conferred with the titles of 'Divisional Durbari', 'Honorary

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35. These were basically social organizations and concentrated their activities mainly on social reforms and building up high moral character. Patriotism and service to the motherland were, of course, also propagated through these organizations.

36. S.C. Mittal, *Haryana, A Historical Perspective*, New Delhi, 1986, p. 81.

37. K.C. Yadav, *Modern Haryana, op. cit.*, p. 136.

38. For detailed description on this see K.C. Yadav, *Ahirwal, op. cit.*, pp. 115-128.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 118.

Magistrate' and 'Rao Bahadur'.<sup>40</sup> So much so that the Viceroy personally awarded him the badge of the "Order of the British Empire" in an informal investiture Ceremony held at Viceregal Lodge, Simla on October 12, 1920.<sup>41</sup> This was the time when Non-cooperation Movement, led by Gandhiji was at its peak in the country and most of the Congress leaders including Gandhiji were in jail.

The analysis given above is, however, not to suggest that Rao Balbir Singh was either anti-national or traitor. He was infact serving the Ahirwal in his own humble way. He was more interested to see that his people did flourish economically and socially. By helping in the recruitment of the Ahirs, he was ensuring their economic well being and by performing social welfare activities, he was creating social awareness and thereby improving their quality of life. During his stints as member of the Punjab Legislative Council he got the Land Control Act passed by the Council so as to save the farmers from getting their lands attached in case of default in repaying the debts.<sup>42</sup> This problem was very acute in Ahirwal and surrounding areas.

Rao Birender Singh, who succeeded Rao Balbir Singh, started his career as a Commissioned Officer in British army in 1942 at the young age of twenty-one and left the army as a Captain in 1947. He developed a very keen interest in politics and since 1952 he has been in active politics throughout. During the period under investigation (1863-1947) he had little to do in Ahirwal or elsewhere.

To conclude, it is evident from the analysis above that Rao Yudhishter Singh, Rao Balbir Singh and Rao Birender Singh- the three successors of the "Hero of Ahirwal" were heavily overburdened and preoccupied with socio-religious welfare and personal activities during the period under study. Moreover, more important than this is that, the iron hand of the British always forbade them from venturing into any dissident activity. The unfavourable political climate of the country, their young age, lack of mature thinking, intemperate attitude and failure to comprehend and foresee, the moves of British diplomacy and above all, the complete centralization of powers of the British left little scope for them to deviate from the path of loyalty to the British.

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40. Foreign Department, File No. 105-108. March 1916. pp. 12, 20, 33, 52, 90; Rao Man Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 318.

41. Foreign Political, File No. 300-301. October 1920. pp. 37, 44, 48, 49; Ambala Division Records, D.C. Gurgaon. File No. 69. pp. 131-33.

42. Laxmi Narayan. *op. cit.*, p. 223.

## **THE GREEN REVOLUTION, UNEMPLOYMENT AND SIKH MILITANCY IN THE PUNJAB**

Chhanda Chattopadhyay \*

Romanticism, cultural ideology and a political creed may sometimes get inextricably associated with certain genuine, practical grievances and may result in social upheavals. The manifestations and fallouts of such social upheavals may not always assume a very rational form and pass the test of morality and decency. Yet, without being able to gloss over its excesses, we cannot help sympathizing with the inherent lawful claims underlying such social upheavals. While shuddering at the Jacobin terror launched during the French Revolution we cannot deny the uprightness of the demands involved in the whole movement, similarly nearer home there are many instances of social movements upholding some honest grievances. The northern districts of West Bengal in the 60's of the twentieth century were in the grip of the Naxalite Movement fighting for a better deal for the sharecroppers and the landless labourers and somehow got linked up with an urban student movement resorting to terrorist tactics and sporadic violence which had to be forcibly brought under control by the CPI(M) Government succeeding the Congress regime in the province.<sup>1</sup> And yet the legitimacy of this movement perhaps received an indirect acknowledgement in the subsequent Operation Barga launched by the CPI(M) in the countryside to improve the lot of the actual cultivator. Sikh militancy which became exacerbated in the wake of the successful agricultural marvel known as the 'Green Revolution' deriving strength from the unevenly distributed affluence that it had brought about, can also be ranked with such world class movements such as the French Revolution or the more familiar Naxalite Movement in Bengal which deserve sympathy and support for the equitable demands that they represented and are yet associated in the popular mind with the horrors of the violence and terror that their execution involved. The purpose of this paper is to highlight how the

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1. Sumanta Banerjee, *In the Wake of Naxalbari: A History of the Naxalite Movement in India*, Calcutta, 1980; Partha Chatterjee, 'The Naxalbari Legacy' in *The Present History of West Bengal*, Essays in Political Criticism, O.U.P., 1977.

social impact of the Green Revolution affected the Sikh rural masses in the Punjab countryside and directly contributed to mobilisation and militancy amongst them.

Although a development belonging purely to the realm of economics, the agricultural breakthrough in the Punjab going under the name of the 'Green Revolution' had important political and social repercussions. Beginning with the experiments of Norman Borlaug, the Norwegian-American agro-scientist and his team of Indian scientists in new types of Mexican dwarf wheat in the Punjab Agricultural University at Ludhiana (established in 1962)<sup>2</sup> and passed on to the farming community as a high yielding variety seed through the IADP or Intensive Agricultural Districts Programme, the 'Green Revolution' was soon to become the core of the New Agricultural Strategy of India.<sup>3</sup> This development had a special significance in view of the terrible food crisis faced by the Indian economy since 1957 when the government had to import 3.7 million tonnes of food and had to enter into the unpopular PL 480 scheme with the U.S. (since 1956) to combat the monsoon failure of 1957 and the fall in agricultural output by 17% and food output by 20%.<sup>4</sup> The monsoon of 1965-66 was the worst of the twentieth century followed by a severe drought in 1966-67 and yet the U.S. government retaliated to the government of India's stand on U.S. postures in Indo-China by refusing to renew PL 480 beyond June 1965-66 and President Johnson started the 'short tether' policy by refusing to commit PL 480 shipments more than one month in advance.<sup>5</sup> The spectacular rise in wheat and paddy production which prompted T.N. Srinivasan to call it a 'wheat revolution' rather than a green revolution<sup>6</sup> through the application of the HYV of seed, chemical fertilizers and pesticides in the north-western parts of the country (Punjab, Haryana and Western U.P.) thus made this region the food bowl of the entire country and bailed out the economy for years to come. This development was particularly welcome in the context of the hardships that the Indian economy was facing at this time under the impact of two difficult wars with its neighbours in 1962 with China and in 1965 with Pakistan. With a mere 30% of the total

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2. Khushwant Singh, *History of the Sikhs, 1839-1988*, Vol. II, O.U.P., 1999, p. 321.

3. Bipan Chandra, Mridula Mukherjee, Aditya Mukherjee, *India After Independence, 1947-2000*, Penguin, 1999, p. 412.

4. *Ibid.*

5. B.R. Tomlinson, *The Economy of Modern India 1860-1970*, Camb. Univ. Press, 1993, pp. 205-06.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 210.

cultivated area of the country, Punjab contributed 70% of the total food grains production of the country in 1969-70 and had exported 16.20 lakh tonnes in 1968-69, 20.02 lakh tonnes in 1969-70 and 22.53 lakh tonnes in 1970-71 of food grains to other states of India and her gift to the nation in this respect stood unparalleled.<sup>7</sup>

The 'Green Revolution' in the Punjab had mainly been the work of Sikh Jat elements, since 90% of Punjab's land under cultivation had been in the possession of this community. The major portion of Muslim evacuee land had gone to the Sikh Jat refugees from Western Punjab after partition and these persevering men along with their eastern counterparts had brought about this agricultural feat. The benefits resulting out of the application of the new methods and new inputs were cornered mainly by the large landholders who had access to credit which might help them take advantage of the new innovations. The modern equipments were often beyond the reach of medium sized land holders who did not even try to go for the high yielding variety of wheat or paddy cultivation and instead kept themselves confined to maize cultivation which was possible with traditional inputs of capital instead of assured means of irrigation like pumpset and tubewell.<sup>8</sup> Those owning marginal landholdings were under tremendous pressure to part with their possessions. The age-old protection of traditionally fixed shares in the total produce reserved for agricultural labourers (*seeri*) was swept away and the initial offer of higher wages slowly disappeared as machines began to take the place of farm hands. Inability to find the initial investments took away even dairying and poultry from marginal cultivators and landless labourers.<sup>9</sup>

The net result of agricultural prosperity was thus a widening "economic gulf between agricultural classes."<sup>10</sup> Although everyone was assured a square meal, yet so far as expenditure on clothing, health and education were concerned, there was a wide divergence auguring a black future for the small and marginal farmers.<sup>11</sup> Even for the better off classes, the benefits of 'Green Revolution' did

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7. *Socio - Economic Review of Punjab 1970-71*, Govt. of Punjab (India), issued by the Economic Adviser to Govt., of Punjab, Chandigarh. \*

8. G.S. Bhalla and G.K. Chadha, *Green Revolution and the Small Peasant : A Study of Income Distribution in Punjab Agriculture*, EPW, May 15 and May 22, 1982.

9. *Ibid.*

10. Khushwant Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 323.

11. G.S. Bhalla and G.K. Chadha, *op. cit.*, EPW, May 22, 1982.

not last for ever and division of holdings among heirs led to a deterioration in the standard of living. Fragmentation of holdings led to unemployment among the heirs of high farmers who looked only for white collar jobs when opportunities of gainful employment in non-white collar jobs were open to them.<sup>12</sup> Such types of unemployment were often indistinguishable from underemployment.<sup>13</sup> Till 1955 two-fifths of the total cultivating population used to remain underemployed, 27% being unemployed 3 to 4 months a year and 15% being unemployed from 5 to 9 months.<sup>14</sup> With a rise in population in the succeeding years, the proportion of unemployed people might have increased. National Sample Survey puts unemployment in the Punjab in 1987-88 at 4.0% which is lower than that of Kerala, West Bengal and Haryana but higher than the national average of 3.77%.

Unemployed or underemployed youth of this genre must have high expectations from life, hard cash having lined up the pockets of their fathers only a few decades ago. Yet as the government bargained with their fathers for lowering the prices of crop levies, they found it difficult to sustain their luxurious life styles from their fragmented holdings. The decision of the Central Govt. in 1974 to allow every constituent state to have a share in the recruitment to the Army, Navy and Air Force in proportion to the number of adult male population of that state came as another big blow to the employment prospect of the Sikhs who had always contributed the largest number of recruits to the defence forces far outnumbering the percentage of their population.<sup>15</sup> While some of them went for westernisation and irreligiousness, some sought solace in the arms of religion and the political propaganda associated with it. Thus the edge of what could have evolved into a class struggle in the Punjab countryside was blunted and economic discontent and class grievances were channelled along religious

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12. Bipan Chandra, Mridula Mukherjee and Aditya Mukherjee, 'Agricultural Growth and the Green Revolution', *op. cit.*
  13. Govt. of Punjab, *Socio-Economic Review, 1970-71*, Chapter XV, Manpower and Employment.
  14. Board of Economic Enquiry, Punjab, Publication No. 76. *Report on the Survey of Rural Unemployment in the Punjab*, Oct.-Dec. 1955 by Gurdit Singh and Narinder Singh Randhawa; Gopal Krishan, 'Jobless in Punjab', in *The Sikh Review*, pp. 43-45.
  15. Implications of the Govt., of India's New Recruiting Policy in the Indian Army' Abridged from the Presidential Address read by Maj. General Gurbaksh Singh, M.V.C. at the convention held at Amritsar on 28 April, under the auspices of Chief Khalsa Diwan. *The Sikh Review*, June 1974.

lines.<sup>16</sup> The wrath of the uprooted peasantry, instead of breaking its head against its dispossessors the high farmers and *Kulaks*, was directed against the central government and the representatives of the majoritarian religion that stood in the way of the fulfilment of their collective destiny.

The Sikhs had been a courageous and valiant people who had thrown the gauntlet to the Mughal Empire. The kingdom of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was in a sense the culmination of the long line of martyrdom of the Sikhs beginning with Guru Arjun Dev in 1606 and advancing through those of Guru Teg Bahadur in 1675 and achieving fulfilment in the formation of the *Khalsa* in 1699 by Guru Gobind Singh. Ranjit Singh had demonstrated that in spite of their slender numbers, it was possible for the Sikhs to rule over people of other races through the superiority of their arms. Even when they succumbed to the British manoeuvrings after the death of Ranjit Singh, the consciousness of this superiority always blazed in their hearts. They stood the British in good stead repeatedly during crisis hours in 1914 and 1939 and in spite of all these, they failed to achieve the one ambition dear to their heart – the right to be the master of their own homeland. As the British slowly started handing over small shares of power to the people of India through various constitutional methods, the Sikhs found themselves cornered and isolated in the game by the jugglery of numbers where the Muslims monopolised all real power and the Hindus controlled the financial sinews of the state.

Partition came as a big blow to the Sikhs as they were pushed out of their prize agricultural possessions in Montgomery and Lyallpur most of which had formed part of ex-servicemen's rewards for heroism during wars and had to be content with exchanging 67 lac acres of most fertile land with 47 lac acres of poor quality Muslim evacuee land. But once in the sovereign, democratic, Indian Republic they could hope to carve out a niche of their own on a linguistic and cultural basis as other Indian states had been allowed to do. They were perpetually haunted by their numerical weakness in a democracy where numbers mattered a lot and were anxious to preserve their distinct identity and cultural heritage as a bridge to their proud past.

The compulsive settlement on the Indian Punjab along with their co-religionists proved to be a blessing in disguise for some time as they could put

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16. Victor S.D' Souza, 'Economy, Caste/Religion and Population Distribution: An Analysis of Communal Tension in Punjab', *EPW*, May 8, 1982.

forward the demand for a Punjabi Suba on a linguistic basis. But in 1953 the commission for redrawing state boundaries rejected their demand as the Hindus of the Punjab had recorded Hindi to be their mother tongue and not Punjabi in the 1961 census. Although Nehru had exhibited great sympathy and admiration for Sikh culture and the Sikh tradition of heroism and sacrifice on earlier occasions, when it came to the question of practical business, he was not found to be very hopeful of the potentiality of Gurumukhi as a language of advanced learning.<sup>17</sup> The merger of PEPSU into the Punjab was initially welcomed as a step towards the Punjabi Suba; however, the net result of this step was to make the Hindus 65% and the Sikhs 35% to weaken the demographic case of the Sikhs.<sup>18</sup>

Ultimately when the Punjabi Suba was conceded in 1966 after the successful defence of the country against the Chinese aggression in 1962 and the Indo-Pak war in 1965 by the Sikhs, there was trouble over the capital city – Chandigarh and Chandigarh was kept as a Union Territory on the plea that 55% of Chandigarh was Hindi speaking according to the 1961 census. In 1970 two rich cotton growing tracts of Punjab, Fazilka tahsil and Abohar were awarded to Haryana in case Chandigarh is transferred to Punjab. Since these territories were not contiguous to Haryana, a corridor was allowed inside the new Punjabi Suba for the access.

These administrative reorganisations were accompanied by constant attempts to break up the solidarity of the Akalis. In 1957 Akalis had won in all predominantly Sikh constituencies and gained control of 136 out of 140 SGPC seats. However, the Congress had won a majority in the legislature and Pratap Singh Kairon continued his intrigues to bring a rift in the ranks of the Akalis. In 1967 the Akalis along with Communists and Jan Sangh cobbled up a majority and Gurnam Singh was made the new Chief Minister. But the intrigues of the Congress leader Gian Singh Rarewala unseated Gurnam Singh. Rarewala then had to face the challenge of the Congress leader Giani Zail Singh and crossed over to the Akalis. In February 1969 Gurnam Singh was brought back once again in the wake of an Akali victory. The Akalis were also divided amongst the followers of Master Tara Singh and Sant Fateh Singh. A new faction was represented by Prakash Singh Badal who became the new C.M. in 1970 when

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17. Tejwant S. Gill, 'Jawahar Lal Nehru and the Punjab' in Pritam Singh and S.S. Thandi (eds.), *Punjabi Identity in a Global Context*, O.U.P., 1999.

18. Khushwant Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

Gurnam Singh had to resign on charges of corruption. Taking advantages of the rift within the Akalis, Giani Zail Singh, the leader of the Punjab Congress was able to rule Punjab.

Giani Zail Singh could keep his rule stable from 1972 to 1977 as he could successfully play off one Akali faction against another, could himself pretend as the champion of Sikh interests by celebrating all Sikh anniversaries – the tricentenary of Guru Gobind Singh, centenary of Singh Sabha, and tricentenary of martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur. He even tried to wrest control of the SGPC. Giani Zail Singh and his mentors – Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her son Sanjay Gandhi tried to patronise militant leadership among the Sikhs as they valued their ability to draw the support of the Sikh masses through the simplicity of their teachings. But their clashes with the Nirankaris, the murder of number of political leaders made it difficult for the Central Government to cover up the open violations of law and order and to allow them to become the symbol of the open violation of state power. The attempts to capture top leadership of the militants and terrorist groups in the Golden Temple was regarded as an outrage against the sanctity of the Sikh place of worship and the rape of Sikh national prestige. This was the turning point when patience for legal and constitutional means of agitation evaporated from the Sikh psyche and the Sikh movement was driven into irrational channels where the heart was often found to rule over the head. While the rest of India look at Punjab's economic achievements with envy, they scarcely imagine what rivers of red blood are camouflaged behind the greenaries of the agricultural revolution that made Punjab the food bowl of the rest of India.

## SHIMLA AND THE EMERGENCE OF NEW SHIMLA

Madhu Sharma \*

Some of the cities in India have twins, like Hyderabad-Secunderabad, Delhi- New Delhi, but Shimla has a unique feature all its own – it is a triad in itself i.e., Shimla, Chhota Shimla and relatively recently, New Shimla. Retracing how Shimla and Chhota Shimla were linked with the construction of the Combermere Bridge and how in the 1980's New Shimla began being developed and springing up to accommodate the ever increasing population is a tale of great interest. The purpose of this paper is to study and thereby throw light on the growth of the city.

To most of us, the history of Shimla is as old as the first Briton clambering up the inhospitable hills in the early decades of the 19th century. No doubt, the present city began to grow under British rule, but mythologically, the little hamlet (originally) and its surrounding hills have their roots in the hoary past, that can be substantiated by the various temples in and around Shimla. On the Jakhu (Jukhoo) summit stands the Jakhoo temple, dedicated to Lord Hanuman. Legend tells us that during the battle between Ram and Ravana, Lakshman was struck by a Shakti *ban* (arrow) and became unconscious. Hanuman was then dispatched to get the life-reviving herb 'Sanjeevani' from the Himalayas. The innocent monkey-god, failing to identify the herb, and with a view to err on the right side, carried the entire mountain range. While flying southwards he put his feet on the summit where the existing Jakhu temple is located. There are many other temples in the city like the Kali Bari in the heart of the city, the Durga temple at Jutogh the famous Kamna Devi or Krira Devi temple. It is believed that paying obeisance to Kamna Devi fulfils the wish of the concerned individual, for this reason it is called Kamna Devi temple. Tara Devi temple has its own history. It is located on the peak of the Tara Devi hill. It was built by Raja of Junga.

The main city is situated at 31°6' north latitude and 77°11' east longitude,<sup>1</sup> with an area of about 7 square miles. Its mean elevation is 7,984 feet above sea level on a number of spurs. The town has beautiful surroundings, with lush

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1. *A Brochure on Simla City*, Government of Himachal Pradesh, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Issued by District Statistical Office, Simla 1973.

green trees and groves dotting the deep vales and steep mountain slopes. The dense deodar, chil and brass (rhododendron) trees enhance its beauty and still, to a degree, maintain its ecological balance. The climate though cold in winter, is salubrious.

Opinions vary about the origin of Shimla. Rev Long's interpretation, quoted in the Shimla Guide of 1870, that Shimla derives its name from 'shyeamalay',<sup>2</sup> the house built of slate erected by the *fakir* at Jakhu, has been viewed as farfetched. The *fakir* used to serve water to the passers- by while others believe it to have its origin from the word 'Shamla' meaning blue female or goddess Kali.<sup>3</sup>

There is a temple of goddess 'Shamli' which supports (possibly, at least according to believers) this view. Some state that the name originated from a solitary house called 'Shamlaey'. Still, others say the name is derivative from the village called 'Shimlah' or 'Shumlah'.

The British had their first contact with Shimla<sup>4</sup> during the foray of Gurkhas to Shimla in 1815 in which they repulsed the latter.

The lands forming the parganah and the present hill station of Shimla originally belonged jointly to the Maharaja of Patiala and the Rana of Keonthal.<sup>5</sup> As early as 1824, European gentlemen, chiefly invalids from the plains, established themselves in this locality with the permission of these chiefs.

A residence, which is described as "a mere cottage of wood and thatch had been built in 1819<sup>6</sup> by Lieutenant Ross, the Assistant Political Officer. "Kennedy House", named after its owner, appears to have the strongest claim of being the first permanent House in Shimla.<sup>7</sup> But unfortunately Kennedy House was gutted in a fire in the 1980's.<sup>8</sup> Lord Combermere had a wooden bridge built across a deep nullah below Jakhu and the bridge is still called Combermere after its builder. The *Shimla District Gazetteer* of 1888-89 mentions that the settlement grew with extraordinary rapidity. From 30 houses in 1830, it crossed 100 in 1841 and 290 in 1866. The number of occupied houses in 1881 was

2. (a) The Rev. Long's interpretation quoted in the Simla Guide of 1870 by W.H. Carey.
- (b) According to Rev. Long whom Mr. W.H. Carey mentions in his Simla guide of 1870.
3. *A Brochure on Simla City*, op. cit.
4. 'Shimla' spelling was officially adopted in 1983.
5. *Gazetteer of the Simla District 1888-89*, Hillman Publishing House, Delhi.
6. Edward Buck, *Simla Past and Present* (Bombay, 1925), p. 6.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Seen by the writer as well as by the local inhabitants of Shimla.

1,141.

It had just 320 inhabitants in 1842,<sup>9</sup> but then rapidly developed, not only into the summer headquarters of the Government of Punjab but also of the Government of India. Subsequently, it acquired repute as a beautiful hill station of Northern India.<sup>10</sup>

The famous 'Auckland House' was constructed which was the Governor General's House. The Christ Church, which stands majestically on the Ridge and can boast of being a recognisable landmark of the present day, Shimla, was designated for the entire Christian population at the time and its first cornerstone was laid by Rev. Daniel Wilson, Bishop of Calcutta and Metropolitan of India on September 9, 1844.<sup>11</sup>

With the passage of time, many schools came into existence. The first school was established in the year 1848 and was called Shimla Municipal School.<sup>12</sup> The other famous school Bishop Cotton, founded by Bishop Cotton, in July 1859,<sup>13</sup> Auckland House School started in 1866, Convent of Jesus and Mary in 1869, Loreto Convent, Tara Hall now called Sacred Heart was established in 1892. Later on, St. Edward's and Loreto day schools came into existence in 1925 and 1945 respectively. These factors reveal that the history of Shimla is inseparably connected with the history of the British settlement in the area.

Several roads were widened in the vicinity of the town. Perhaps, the most important of the roads which were widened and improved at that time was below the Lakkar Bazar and Blessington (then informally known as lover's walk) which connected the Kaithu Bazar and which is known as the Circular Road. It was further extended to Kennedy House on one side and Annadale on the other.

A 560 feet tunnel, construction of which commenced in 1850 under Major Briggs, was completed in the winter of 1851-52.<sup>14</sup> Now we know this tunnel as

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9. *A Brochure on Simla City, op. cit.*, p. 1.

10. *Ibid.*

11. Vipin Pubby, *Simla Then and Now, Summer Capital of the Raj*. Indus Publishing Company, New Delhi, p. 28.

12. *Punjab District Gazetteers, Volume VIII; A Gazetteer of The Simla District 1904*, Indus Publishing Company, New Delhi, p. 112.

13. *Ibid.*

14. Edward Buck, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

Sanjauli-Dhalli tunnel.

A large bazar was established on relatively flat land which was later converted into a ridge and was lined with shops on either side before a fire broke out there in 1875.<sup>15</sup> Official permission to the shops was denied by the Shimla Municipality. However, the shopkeepers were provided with alternative sites. Indian businessmen, chiefly Soods and Parsis, opened shops.

The local authorities paid earnest attention to the availability of water for the growing number of residents. Thus, the huge reservoir under the Ridge was constructed in 1880.<sup>16</sup>

To John Lawrence goes the credit of deciding to shift the summer capital of the Raj to Shimla from Calcutta. Thus, Shimla became the summer Capital of the Government of India. Shimla also remained the headquarters of the Burma Government for some period during the Second World War, during which the country (Burma) was occupied by Japanese forces. From 1876 to 1947, Shimla remained the headquarters of the Government of Punjab. After partition of India Shimla retained importance as headquarters for the East Punjab Government.

Many people are of the opinion that the turning point for partition culminated at Shimla. The noted 1945 Shimla Conference was held at Shimla itself.

Thus, on 15th August, 1947, the Britishers left Shimla. The exodus of the British and a large majority of Muslims from Shimla was a heartrending experience. Tearful the old residents, who had lived in and loved Shimla, departed. Those running in fear of their lives, could be seen dragging their children, terror writ large on their faces.<sup>17</sup>

The Britons left Shimla in 1947 but some of their magnificent buildings still remain (though a few were gutted). Those existent still add to the city's beauty and were occupied by West Punjabis.

After 1947, many problems and hurdles sprang up and surfaced, the chief one being accommodation. Population varied, increasing markedly during the salubrious season. The tourist inflow decreased considerably during winter due to the severe cold and great snow.

The population of the city increased as per the decennial population census

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15. Vipin Pubby. *op. cit.*, p. 50.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

17. The residents of Shimla and many others were the eyewitnesses of the scene.

shown below.

According to the decennial population census, the population of the town had been increasing as under :-

Years	Population	% decadel variation
1881	13,258	-
1891	13,034	-1.69
1901	13,960	7.10
1911	18,934	3.63
1921	26,149	38.11
1931	18,144	-30.6
1941	18,348	1.12
1951	46,150	151.53
1961	42,597	-7.70
1971	55,326	29.88

The Panjab University of Lahore was set up at Solan and its library shifted to the top floor of U.S. Club Shimla.<sup>18</sup> A large number of officers and employees were shifted from Lahore. The Dwarka Das Library was also on the top floor of U.S. Club, Shimla. Many Central Government officers were retained at Shimla due to shortage of accommodation at Delhi. The High Court of Punjab was located at Peterhoff, a former residence of the Viceroy. The main Punjab Secretariat was shifted to Shimla and Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava was made the Premier of East Punjab.

Another problem, the deluge of refugees, was also faced in the city. 38 thousand Hindus and Sikhs came from newly formed Pakistan. The provision of bare minimum facilities to these uprooted families was a stupendous task. The government took every possible measure to rehabilitate them. Some were housed in the buildings vacated by the Muslims who had migrated. However, a few Muslim families returned to Shimla from Pakistan after several months.

Before 1947, Himachal Dham was the office of the Political Agent of the Hill States and was called Foreign Office. But when Himachal Pradesh came into existence on 15th April, 1948, the Himachal Pradesh Secretariat was located here and the building was called Himachal Dham but it was destroyed

18. Sh. S.M. Sharma and Mian Goverdhan Das were the eyewitnesses who were interviewed by this researcher.

in a fire on May 5, 1947.<sup>19</sup> Now a new building stands – All India Radio, Shimla. Shimla remained the capital of East Punjab.

On 1st November, 1966, Shimla, along with some territory of Punjab, was transferred to Himachal Pradesh (vide Punjab Reorganisation Act, 1966). Thus, Shimla became the capital of Himachal Pradesh on that very day.

With the establishment of Himachal Pradesh many people from neighbouring districts began settling in Shimla, consequently adding even more to the population. Many Biharis, Nepalis and Gurkhas came to Shimla in search of work.

People coming from Uttar Pradesh set up businesses and wholesale vegetable and fruit dealerships. Gurkhas worked mostly in apple orchards. Biharis and Kashmiris took up work as coolies, shopkeepers and some of them began retail vegetable businesses. People originally from Saharanpur started selling wooden articles in Lakkar Bazar. Bilaspuris, initially riksha pullers, were reduced to labourers. Some set up small-scale handicrafts businesses, others mushroom cultivation and some others took up the profession of weaving shawls and *loies*.

Shimla Medical College came into existence in 1966 and it is now known as Indira Gandhi Medical College under Himachal Pradesh University. Numerous educational institutions and hospitals came into existence.

Once again, the most dire need was of accommodation. Many students came to study in Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla. As such, more staff and employees, some new, were appointed. So a vast number of buildings for students, staff and employees were constructed.

Tourists also poured in large numbers, leading to the construction of hotels and dharamshalas.

The business community of upper Shimla Hills, well-off potato and apple growers bought land in Shimla for residential purposes to enable access to better education.

Presently Shimla is further expanding. Many people are constructing buildings without maintaining proper norms and so a kind of mushroom growth is coming up either along roads or near the towns. Buildings are being built by private bodies, Government agencies, autonomous agencies, individual agencies and University bodies. The Financial Corporation and Housing Board has come into existence.

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19. Seen by local residents of Shimla.

In order to solve the accommodation problem a suitable piece of land was selected a little away from the town, later called New Shimla. It also became part of the city.

New Shimla, developed by the Shimla Development Authority and under further development by the Himachal Pradesh Nagar Vikas Pradhikaran, is about 8 kms., from the main local bus stand or from the heart of the city. The areas of Patti, Rajana and Anji (Kasumpti) villages were acquired along with another below Bishop Cotton School Complex, for development. The Shimla Development Authority is now called the Himachal Pradesh Nagar Vikas Pradhikaran.

After undergoing an era of unplanned and haphazard growth, the city was considered fortunate enough to get S.D.A. approval on 14.12.1983 vide Himachal Pradesh Government Notification No. PN(B) 15(14)/83.<sup>20</sup> The Hon'ble Chief Minister, Himachal Pradesh, is the Chairman, and C.E.O.-cum-Chief Engineer, Shimla Development Authority, Shimla is the Member-Secretary with other members of the various departments.

The Shimla Development Authority was created to meet the requirements of mushroom like growth of the Shimla town and adjacent areas.

Approximately 90% of the SDA area was formerly out of the official vicinity of the Shimla Municipal Corporation area. Further expansion is taking place towards 'New Shimla' which is currently being developed by the Shimla Development Authority.

The Shimla Development Authority (S.D.A.), is not functionally viable. To begin with a grant-in-aid of Rs. 330 lacs was given by the Government which was utilized towards land acquisition. The schemes were floated by the S.D.A. Four sites were selected in the Kasumpti Developmental Zone. The S.D.A. is floating schemes under two categories, i.e., self financing and partially self-financing. Under self-financing, the entire amount of estimated cost of construction is recovered from the allottees within the period stipulated for completion of the unit. And under partially self-financing scheme, part of the amount is received from the allottees before handing over possession and the balance is recovered to with interest after handing over the possession. The shortfall between the amount received from the allottees and the cost of completion of the units is arranged through loans from HUDCO,<sup>21</sup> the

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20. Audit Report and Annual Accounts for the year 1986-87. Shimla Development Authority. Khalini, Shimla.

21. Harayana Urban Development Corporation.

### Government of India and the State Government.

The problem of water shortage cropped up, later solved by the State Government which sanctioned a water supply scheme from Ashwani Khud and execution of this water supply scheme was carried out by the Shimla Development Authority on behalf of the Government. The estimated cost of the scheme was Rs. 9 crores, which was commissioned in April 1992 and now falls under the Irrigation and Public Health (IPH) Department. This scheme provides 54 lakh litres of water per day to the Kasumpti Zone. The work of the Kasumpti Zone Centre was taken in hand at the first instance. The sites were as follows :

1. Commercial Complex.
2. Residential-social Housing Complex.
3. Residential Complex below B.C.S. Phase-I.
4. Residential Complex below B.C.S. Phase-II.
5. Residential Complex below B.C.S. Phase-III.

First, let us examine the commercial complex. 34 commercial blocks were planned there, the land measuring 101.12 bighas was acquired on 24th February, 1984. Two schemes were floated as follows:

First self-financing (1985-86), another second self-financing (1991-92).

Work on 27 blocks commenced, which comprised an area of 25296.55 sq. mt. numbering 185 shops. The tentative cost at the time was envisaged as Rs. 3000/- per sq. mt. Applicants were required to apply on the prescribed form along with 10% of the cost as earnest money.

The response was poor and hence work could not be started early, thus, delaying the completion date. There was a steep hike in cost, resultantly increasing the cost of completion.

Various organisations such as Assistant Provident Fund Commissioner (H.P. Shimla); Directorate, Postal Services; H.P. State Handicraft and Handloom Corporation; H.P. State Forest Corporation; L.I.C.; Telecommunication, Circle Shimla. etc., were allotted commercial premises or plots.

Afterwards the cost per sq. mt. of the commercial area worked out to be Rs. 4,211/- per sq. mt.

Shops were also constructed. Even after 1988 the various schemes were still open and various organisations were allotted sites in 1990 at the rate of 4500/- sq. mt. (plinth area) with an additional Rs. 500/- in case the allottee desired specific portions to be provided in the commercial complex. Allotment

was made to the Provident Fund Commissioner, Directorate of Health Services and U.C.O. Bank and others.

Commercial space was also allotted to more organisations such as Himurja, Co-operative Bank, Excise and Taxation Department, Women's Welfare Deptt., State Consumer Forum, District Consumer Forum, Shimla Ayurveda Department and others.

### **Residential Social Housing Complex at Kasumpti**

#### **Zonal Centre :**

The following schemes were also offered :

- (i) Partial self-financing scheme of Social Housing in Kasumpti Zonal Centre.
- (ii) Social Housing Scheme at Kasumpti Zonal Centre, Phase-I
- (iii) Social Housing Scheme at Kasumpti Zonal Centre, Phase-II at Kasumpati Zonal Centre in 1984.

The land measuring 89.13 *bighas* was acquired to accommodate the allotment of the following units.

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>No. of units constructed</b>
1.	Economical Weaker Section (E.W.S.) Flats	290
2.	Middle Income Group (MIG) I Flats	88
3.	Middle Income Group (MIG) II Flats	570
4.	Middle Income Group (MIG)II Deluxe Flats	6
<b>Total flats</b>		<b>954</b>

Thus, a number of buildings came up.

In the year 1986, the 2nd self-financing scheme, 3rd and 4th partial self-financing schemes were floated in order to accommodate the allottees of these schemes, another 107.03 *bighas* of land was acquired.

**Total No. of units constructed under Social Housing Schemes:**

1.	Economical Weaker Section (EWS)	290
2.	High Income Group (HIG) I	88
3.	High Income Group (HIG) II	570
4.	High Income Group (HIG) Deluxe	6
<b>Total Units</b>		<b>954</b>

#### **Below BCS Phase- I**

Flats of all categories constructed = 287 Nos.

Houses of all categories constructed numbered 177.

Plots of all categories numbered 596.

### **Below BCS Phase- II**

Flats of all categories constructed numbered 435.

Houses of all categories numbered 74.

Plots of all categories numbered 258.

Land measuring 107 *bighas*, 3 *biswas*, was acquired by the S.D.A. but the owners moved the Court for enhancement of the compensation, and were subsequently awarded an additional amount of Rs. 1.71 crores, including interest as compensation of land in the case of 102 *bighas*, 18 *biswas* which was contested by the land owners.

The residential complex below BCS (Phase- II) was advertised during the month of December, 1989. The construction work of the following units of various categories in the acquired portion of land has been taken up in hand :

Sr. No.	Category	No. of Allottees/Units
I.	Flats	
	Economically Weaker Section (EWS)	47
	Type (a)	69
	Type (b)	178
	Type (c)	46
	Type (d)	30
II.	Independent Houses	
	Type A	26
	Type B	21
	Type C	8
	Type D	5
III.	Developed Plots	
	Type A	73
	Type B	169
	Type C	15
	Type D	8

### **Demand Survey-cum-Registration :**

In November 1992, applications were invited for registration under Demand Survey-cum-Registration. 493 applications have been received for different categories. About 73.00 *bighas* of land has been proposed to be acquired

for the scheme and the acquisition is being finalised.

The Government of Himachal Pradesh has constituted an authority named "Himachal Pradesh Nagar Vikas Pradhikaran, Kasumpti, Shimla-9" with the sole idea of unified development in the urban as well as in the selected rural areas. It is proposed to develop the new towns, expansion of existing towns and setting-up of urban estates so as to have reliable facilities such as roads, water supply, sewerage, electricity, emergency services and all other essentials.

With the creation of Himachal Pradesh Nagar Vikas Pradhikaran on 14.11.1994, Pradhikaran lauded itself on speedy completion of spacious Commercial space shops units i.e., flats, independent houses, plots and early allotment to the allottees. Many schools have made their appearances like D.A.V. School and Sanjay Gandhi School and some other private schools. The Pradhikaran also managed to avoid a financial crisis—a matter of vital importance which is to be acclaimed. Now the Himachal Pradesh Nagar Vikas Pradhikaran has further merged with H.P. Housing Board.

At last we concluded that Simla, the old name of Shimla was known as the Simla Hill States during the British period. The principal rivers of the surrounding tracts were the Sutlej, Pabar, Giri Ganga, Gambhar and Sarsa. The rocks found in the neighbourhood of Shimla belong entirely to the carbonaceous system and fall into four groups; The Krol, the infra-Karol, the Blaini and the infra Blaini or Shimla Slates. No fossil had been found in any of these rocks and in consequence their geological age is unknown.<sup>22</sup>

The district contained 6 towns and 45 villages. The population at each of the three enumerations was (1881) 36,119, (1891) 35,851 and (1901) 40,351. It increased by 12.6 percent in the last decade. Now this situation has changed totally with the emergence of New Shimla. The Simla Baptist Mission was started in 1865. The American Prerbyterian Mission had an out-station at Sabathu, occupied in 1837, and supported a leper asylum and various schools. The Kotgarh branch of the church missionary society, established in 1840, was an itinerant mission to the hill tribes. In 1901 the District contained 368 native Christians.<sup>23</sup>

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22. McMohan, *The Blaini Group and Central Genesis in the Simla Himalayas*. Records, Geological Survey of India. Vol. X, Part IV; Oldham, G., *Geology of Simla and Jutogh*. Ibid Vol. XX, Part-II. Manual of Geology of India, Second edition, p. 132 (The Carbonaceous system).

23. *Imperial Gazetteer of India*. Provincial Series Punjab, Vol. II (Calcutta 1908), pp. 341-347.

Shimla town had been the headquarter of Shimla district, Punjab and Summer capital of the Government of India, situated in a transverse spur of the central Himalayan system. The latent situation was changed of Shimla town, when Mahatma Gandhi enlightened at the Summer Hill Railway Station on 11th May 1921. Vithal Bhai Patel was the President of the Legislative Assembly, resigned from his post at Shimla on 26th April, 1930, was a momentous day at Shimla. Under the presidentship of Pandit Padam Dev, Himalayan Riyasti Praja Mandal was launched at Shimla on 1st June 1939. Shimla was the headquarter of exciled Burma Government from July 1942 to 1945. In 1945 Lord Wavell convened Simla Conference. Himachal Pradesh came to own Shimla from 1st November 1966.

## NATURE OF IJARA UNDER RANJIT SINGH

Radha Sharma \*

The term *ijara* during the reign of Ranjit Singh was used for the arrangement by which a certain source of income was placed in the charge of a person on the condition that he would pay a stipulated sum to the state in return. The contemporary evidence: revenue records, chronicles, akhbarat, parwanas and the early settlement and administrative reports give us a fairly good idea of the extent and nature of working of this system.<sup>1</sup> *Ijara* of the revenues of the entire province of Kashmir for example, was held by Diwan Chuni Lal and Diwan Kirpa Ram. The *ijara* of Kangra hills was given to Lehna Singh and Desa Singh Majithia and the *ijara* of Dhani Gheb was held by Dhanna Singh Malwai.<sup>2</sup> The *ta'alluqas* Ahmadabad, Dhani, Pathankot, Sharakpur, Shahdara, Hariana, Katha and Dhak, were farmed out to Diwan Singh for a sum of rupees 2,50,000 in 1816; Jammu was farmed out to Diwan Bhawani Das for one lakh rupees for the year 1817-18. Rohtas in district Jhelam was given in *ijara* to Raja Gulab Singh, who also held the lease of Bhera in the district of Shahpur for sometime.<sup>3</sup> The district of Jhang was farmed out to a number of persons like Lala Sukh Dayal, Diwan Sawan Mal, Jaswant Singh, Dal Singh and Mul Raj. Qila Sobha Singh and *pargana* Zafarwal were given in *ijara* to Budh Singh and later on to Jawala Singh Bhirania. Bhaiya Ram Singh was assigned the *ijara* of Ramgarhia territories.<sup>4</sup> Lal Kanhiya was given the *ijara* of Dinga and Garhshankar and Shaikh Ghulam Mohi-ud-din was given Phagwara on similar

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1. Sohan Lal Suri, *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*, Daftar II, 196, 228-29, 242, 261 & 356; Amar Nath, *Zafarnama-i-Ranjit Singh*, pp. 80 and 132-33; *Events at the Court of Ranjit Singh* (1810-17), Monograph No. 17, Languages Department, Punjab 1970, pp. 198, 228 & 280; *Report on the Administration of the Punjab 1849-50*, p. 82.
2. *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*, Daftar II, pp. 263 & 353; also Daftar III, pp. 228 & 445. See also, Fauja Singh, *Some Aspects of State and Society under Ranjit Singh*, Master Publishers, New Delhi, 1982, p. 181.
3. *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*, Daftar III, p. 66; *Foreign Secret Consultations*, 28 April, 1848, No. 64; *SR Shahpur 1866*, p. 56.
4. *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*, Daftar II, pp. 242 & 356.

terms.<sup>5</sup> In the *parwanas* issued by Ranjit Singh during the year 1834-35 we find that Sardar Tej Singh was controlling more than one *ta'alluqa* on the basis of *ijara*. What is equally evident from these documents is that a village or a number of villages could be entrusted to important persons or *jagirdars* in *ijara*. There were no set rules for the grant of *ijara*. Sometimes a single village could be given to one or more than one *ijaradar*. For example a village in Naushehra Pannuan was given to two individuals Sunder Singh and Dhaunkal Singh Maur. Similarly Munshi Rattan Chand was assigned the *ijara* of Hardonagar for 1800 rupees a year.<sup>6</sup> It may also be mentioned that a single well or a group of wells too were given in *ijara* particularly in the lower Bari, Rachna and Sind Sagar *doabs*.<sup>7</sup> The practice of *ijara* thus was known almost everywhere during the period of Sikh rule and the levels on which it was resorted to varied from parts of a village to a number of *parganas* and to a province.

The practice of *ijara* was not confined to the revenues from land only. The great seal (*muhar-i-kalan*) of the Maharaja remained in *ijara* for a long time with Lala Devi Das for 1,80,000 rupees till 1818 when it was given to Lala Devi Sahai for 2,25,000 rupees. The *sairat*, that is, taxes other than land revenue, of Kashmir were given in *ijara* in 1822. In 1819, Jawahar Mal was given the *ijara* of *shaldagh* for 10 lakhs of rupees.<sup>8</sup> The *abkari* or contract for selling liquor in the city of Lahore, the Kampu-i-Mu'alla and the royal camp was given in *ijara* to Sardar Tej Singh and Jawahar Mal. Similarly the salt mines, customs and even justice were given in *ijara*.<sup>9</sup>

The form of *ijara* prevalent during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was *mutaahidi* which was different from the *ijara* under the Mughals. The main difference between *ijara* and *mutaahidi* lay in the fact that the former agreement was generally made without any conditions except the payment of the full amount as agreed upon between the parties, the latter practice on the other hand, implied the agreement to collect the assessed revenue from the tract and remit the same to the treasury. A person who entered into a *mutaahidi* agreement was entitled to deductions in case the crops were damaged on account of natural calamities

5. *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*. Daftar III, pp. 314-15.

6. J.S. Grewal and Indu Banga (eds.). *Civil and Military Affairs*, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1987, pp. 60-61.

7. Indu Banga, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, Manohar 1978, p.98. See also, Radha Sharma, *Peasantry and the State*, K.K. Publishers 2001, p.131.

8. *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*, Daftar II, pp. 228-29; Banga, *Agrarian System*, p. 98.

9. *Civil and Military Affairs*, p. 61; Henry Lawrence, *Adventures of an Officer in the Service of Ranjit Singh*. Vol. I, p. 51.

provided the government was convinced of the genuineness of the representation. He was also required to apprise the state of any increase in the revenues of the area.<sup>10</sup> Such kinds of *ijaradars* or *mutaahhid* were treated as government servants and performed duties very similar to those of the *chaudharies* and *muqaddams*. This is further substantiated by the information contained in *parwanas* that whereas some *ta'alluqas* were administered by *kardars* like Misr Kaku Mal, Faqir Tajuddin Ansari and Mul Raj, the other *ta'alluqas* were held by important men like Sardar Tej Singh, Sardar Jai Singh Attariwala, Prince Sher Singh, General Avitabile and Sardar Jaimal Singh on *ijara*, stipulating the amount to be paid to the state for collecting and appropriating the revenues of a given *ta'alluqa*. It is further stated that in actual working, however, the two arrangements do not appear to have differed much.<sup>11</sup> It appears that the proportion of revenue collected through *ijara* was less in earlier period of the reign of Ranjit Singh. Only the distant and difficult *ta'alluqas* were placed under powerful *jagirdars* and courtiers on the basis of *ijara* while the nearer and soft *ta'alluqas* were placed under the direct control and administration of the officials. With the increase in military expenditure—a natural consequence of the progressive augmentation of forces and the growth of civil administration, there arose the need to collect cash by encouraging the already existing practice of farming out the revenues of large areas of cultivable lands to the *ijaradars* for periods varying from 3 to 6 years.<sup>12</sup> The proportion of revenue collected through *ijara* towards the end of the kingdom of Lahore was considerable. In 1847 in the Punjab plains between the Beas and Indus, one-fifth of the total revenue was collected through the system of *ijara*.<sup>13</sup>

As essential clue to the nature of *ijara* during over period is to be found in the term *mushkhasa* or fixation of the revenue payable in advance. It was generally based on verification of the expected revenues for a given territory and the amount of lease generally approximated the actual revenue capacity of the given area based on records of collections made in the past. The early British administrators mistakenly assumed the maintenance of the revenue records and the system of *ijara* as incompatible. For them the 'contractors' paid a certain

10. N.A. Siddiqi, *Mughal Land Revenue Administration*, pp. 92-93.

11. *Civil and Military Affairs*, p. 60.

12. Sita Ram Kohli, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh* (Punjabi), Atma Ram and Sons, Delhi 1953, p. 215; G.L. Chopra, *Punjab As a Sovereign State*, pp. 78-79.

13. *Foreign Secret Consultations 30 October 1847*, No. 95; *Report on the Administration of Punjab 1849-50*, p. 83. See also, Radha Sharma, *Peasantry and the State*, p. 131.

'sum into the state treasury and were permitted to collect as much more as was possible for themselves.'. The *ijaradar*, in fact, paid to the state a lump-sum amount which was never above the assessed amount.<sup>14</sup> In one of the *parwanas* (1834) Jamadar Khushal Singh was asked to state his opinion after a careful consideration of the estimated revenues of some villages around Lahore as to whether it was better to give these villages to one Gangu Mal on *ijara* for 6000 rupees a year or to collect revenue directly from the *zamindars* on the basis of *kankut*.<sup>15</sup> General Ventura and Diwan Sawan Mal, for instance, were ordered to prepare 'correct' reports on the revenues respectively of Dera Ghazi Khan and Jhang before these territories were given on *ijara*. On the conquest of a new territory, the amount of *ijara* was fixed either on a rough estimate of the revenues or on the basis of revenue records if available. This arrangement was likely to be temporary, the amount of *ijara* to be revised later on. On the annexation of Peshawar, for instance, Prince Nau Nihal Singh was offered its *ijara* for 12 lakhs of rupees. But later on collection of detailed information 'on the revenue of every village' it was reduced to about 8 lakhs of rupees. We may be sure that the settlement with the *ijaradar* was made for an amount less than the expected revenue for the area farmed out and thus leaving a margin to enable him to meet the expenses of collection and to save something as a profit.<sup>16</sup> There is an interesting case that refers to the margin allowed to be retained by the *ijaradar* in *parwanas*. The estimated income from the sale of liquor in the city of Lahore, the Kampu-i-Mu'alla and the royal camp was 19,000 rupees a year. Sardar Tej Singh and Jawahar Mal were asked to undertake this sale. The former was allowed to retain 1500 rupees from the sales and the latter 500 rupees. This document brings out the rationale behind the *ijara*. It shows that within the range of careful calculation the *ijaradar* was assured a certain share in the returns as a reward for his services. In this case the share of *ijaradars* amounted to about 10 per cent.<sup>17</sup>

The *ijaradar* at times sought to increase the margin of profit in their favour by his vigilance and personal efforts in discovering and assessing the newly reclaimed lands which were not included in the *jam'a* or estimated revenue. Sometimes they demanded a reduction in the amount before they accepted the *ijara*. The Maharaja, for instance, granted the request for a deduction of 10,000

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 131-32.

15. *Civil and Military Affairs*, pp. 60-61 and 150.

16. Banga, *Agrarian System*, p. 98.

17. *Civil and Military Affairs*, p. 61.

from the total amount of rupees 1.70 lakhs before Sardar Jawala Singh Bhirania accepted the *ijara* of Qila Sobha Singh and Zafarwal in 1828. In 1834, when Hari Singh Nalwa was offered the *illaqa* of Ghar in *ijara* for 90,000 rupees. He was reluctant to accept that till it was reduced to 85,000 rupees in the first year of the contract.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, there were cases when the request of reduction in the amount of *ijara* was not accepted by the Maharaja. In 1812, for instance, the request of Munshi Devi Dass for concession in the *ijara* of the office of Mir Munshi was not accepted by the Maharaja and he accepted the office of 'Mir Munshi' on the same amount of one lakh rupees and promised to abide by all the orders of the Noble Sarkar.<sup>19</sup>

The *ijaradar* always undertook to pay a certain stipulated sum to the government before he was actually authorized to collect revenue from the area assigned to him. Besides, he was required to supply as a part of stipulated revenue, the special products like a special variety of grain, vegetables and some animals of special breed from the area under his jurisdiction. The royal house, for instance, received wheat from Chhachh. The *ijaradars* were expected to submit a detailed statement of produce and collections and were supposed to keep the cultivators content and add to the resources of the country by extending cultivation. They were to give to the government a written deed of acceptance (*Qabuliat*). Raja Gulab Singh, for instance, gave in writing in 1835 that :

"The collected revenues shall be sent to His Majesty....No produce from land, not even a dam's worth shall be kept concealed. Whatever the increase or decrease in the revenue of the territory bestowed upon me shall be submitted to His Majesty. I shall keep the people content and country under cultivation."<sup>20</sup>

Each *ijara* grant was made in writing and invariably contained a reference to the urgency of always keeping in mind the welfare of the cultivators and prosperity of the *illaqa*. There are numerous examples of this kind.<sup>21</sup> *Ijaradars* while collecting the revenues adhered to the *hast-o-bud* or rates of assessment fixed by the government, though they could adopt any method of assessment *batai*, *kankut* and *zabt* subject to the condition of the acceptance of the cultivators

18. *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*, Daftar II, 356; See also, Radha Sharma, *Peasantry and the State*, p. 132.

19. *Events at the Court of Ranjit Singh*, p. 43.

20. Sita Ram Kohli, "Land Revenue Administration", *Panjab Past and Present* (1971), Vol. V-2; See also, Prem Singh Hoti, *Sher-i-Panjab Maharaja Ranjit Singh*. Lahore Book Shop, 1918. p. 164; See also, Radha Sharma, *Peasantry and the State*, p. 133.

21. *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*, Daftar III, p. 162.

or the local *panches*, *chaudharies* and *muqaddams*.<sup>22</sup> They were also barred from making any kind of illegal exaction and were not allowed to interfere with any concession given by the government to any grantee in their jurisdiction. Abdus Samad Khan, for example, was given Leiah and Mankera on *ijara* for 3,53,000 rupees, excluding the lands granted in *dharmarth*.<sup>23</sup>

There were some cases, where in the big *ijaradars* collected the revenues by under-leasing the areas through locally influential persons. It appears that under-leasing or sub-letting of the land held on *ijara* could not be done without the concurrence of the Maharaja. In 1831, Raja Gulab Singh, for example, wanted to assign Rohtas to *chaudhari* Fazal Dad and submitted a petition to the Maharaja for granting the contract to the *chaudhari*. The Maharaja allowed the sub-letting of the *ijara* after satisfying himself of the credentials of the *chaudhari*, that too, on the production of a surety of a local *khatri* of Pind Dadan Khan.<sup>24</sup>

The evidence, cited above, also throws light on the working of *ijara* under the Maharaja. It appears that the Maharaja insisted on realization of the stipulated amount or *mushkhasa* in full for which it was customary to accept sureties (*zamini*). In case *ijaradar* failed to realize the sum specified by the government :

"He is imprisoned with more or less severity, degraded, cast off or forgiven, and allowed another chance in another quarter, with the balance written against his name, according to his interest at court, the opinion of his ability or the cause of the defalcation."<sup>25</sup>

There are references that in case of default, bargaining was done over the arrears by the defaulters. An amount of 40,000 rupees stood against the name of Bhaiya Ram Singh. He expressed his inability to pay the amount and after negotiations the sum of 10,000 was fixed as a balance against him. In another instance, an amount of rupees two lakhs stood against Sardar Jawand Singh Mokal, the *ijaradar* of Nakka's territory. He also got a considerable reduction after pleading before the Maharaja in 1828.<sup>26</sup> The defaulting *ijaradar* could be saved from being punished if some one else paid the amount on his behalf.

Ranjit Singh was well aware of the grave dangers inbuilt into the system of *ijara*. There is no doubt that an average *ijaradar* would have the temptation to collect more than the sum payable to the government irrespective of the well-

22. Henry Lawrence, *Adventures*. Vol. I, pp. 50-51; Fauja Singh, *State and Society*, pp. 183-84.

23. *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*, Daftar II, p. 394; also Indu Banga, *Agrarian System*, p. 100.

24. *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*, Daftar III, p. 66; Radha Sharma, *Peasantry and the State*, p. 133.

25. Henry Lawrence, *Adventures*, p. 51.

26. Radha Sharma, *Peasantry and the State*, pp. 133-34.

being of the cultivators. The interest of the Maharaja in the well being of his subjects, his alacrity to take actions against the defaulters, and his frequent tours besides his system of intelligence generally curbed this natural tendency on the part of *ijaradars*. Moreover, he exercised a great care in the selection of his *ijaradars*. They were not mere speculators or moneyed men rather they were the men connected with the government and administration in one way or the other : Diwan Devi Das, Bhaiya Ram Singh, Faqir Nuruddin, Prince Nau Nihal Singh, Raja Gulab Singh, Raja Dhian Singh, Diwan Sawan Mal and Jawand Singh Mokhal for instance. However, for the *ijara* of a single village, *muqaddam* of the village concerned was preferred.

If the *ijara* was for a group of villages, local *chaudharis* were given preference. Since they had to deal with the members of their own *bhaicharas*, it was presumed that they would not be unfair to the people who were to pay the revenue. Suitability of a person for a given place appears to be the most important consideration before the Maharaja in the selection of his *ijaradar* and if his selection did not work well upto his satisfaction, he was quick to change the *ijaradar*. The appointment of Bir Dhar Pandit who had acted as the Diwan of Kashmir under the Afghans as the *ijaradar* of Kashmir, and his subsequent removal, is a case in point. Diwan Dhanpat Rai's request for the *ijara* of the *ta'alluqa* of Eminabad was refused. Similarly the request of Raja Gulab Singh and Raja Dhian Singh for the *ijara* of Diwan Sawan Mal's territories was also refused by the Maharaja.<sup>27</sup>

The government kept a watch on the *ijaradars* to ensure that they carried out the prescribed conditions laid down for them. In case the *ijaradar* happened to be an outsider the check was exercised by the revenue officials of the area concerned. The *kardars* kept a vigil over the conduct of the *muqaddams*, the *chaudharis* and petty revenue officials. Besides Ranjit Singh readily listened to the complaints of the cultivators against the *ijaradars*. As a result of the Maharaja's insistence that the *ijaradars* must not cause any damage to the interests of the cultivators or hinder the growth of agriculture, many of the *ijaradars* who failed in making good their charge were ruined. Sham Singh Peshauria, for instance, was imprisoned and Sardar Sham Singh Attariwala was replaced by Lehna Singh Majithia in Khemkaran.<sup>28</sup> Moorcraft observes that 'the farmers of revenue were resisted in their tyrannical proceedings; they were more likely to be changed than to be supported by battalions.'<sup>29</sup> Even the

27. Indu Banga, *Agrarian System*, pp.102-03.

28. *Umdat-ut-Twarikh*, Daftar III, pp. 139, 212 & 298.

29. W. Moorcraft and G. Treback, *Travels in the Himalayan Provinces of Hindustan and the Punjab*, Languages Department, Punjab 1970 (first published 1837), p. 99.

high officials like Diwan Kirpa Ram, Rama Nand Sahu, Bhaiya Ram Singh, and Pandit Bir Dhar were not excused. We can multiply such examples.

At the same time, there were many such *ijaradars* who were known for their good management and concern for the well-being of the people. Apart from the celebrated names like Diwan Sawan Mal and Misr Rup Lal, there were *ijaradars* at the lower levels who were popular among the people like Diwan Hukma Singh (*mustajjir*) of Lahore and Pir Baksh *ijaradar* of Mangowal in the Chaj Doab.<sup>30</sup> It may be pointed out that, among other things, the stability of market prices of grain and other agricultural produce had a great deal to do with the successful working of the *ijara* system. Since *ijara* was mostly granted in terms of cash. In the event of a rise in prices the *ijaradars* stood to gain but in case of fall in the prices they were to lose a lot unless the government came to their rescue.<sup>31</sup>

The above description of the practice of *ijara* under Ranjit Singh becomes more meaningful when we compare this with the practice followed under the later Mughals. Under the later Mughals, the *ijara* was given to the highest bidder. There were bankers, speculators who made the bidding for *ijara*. The bidding system led to fixation of land revenue demand which was excessive and incompatible with the paying capacity of the peasantry. The burden of increased land revenue demand was, no doubt, distributed among the peasants, but it meant extensive exploitation of the peasantry. The exploitation of the peasantry during the last years of the Mughals was so extensive that it brought ruin to the cultivators and the villages were deserted. Maharaja Ranjit Singh, continued with the practice of *ijara* but with substantial difference. Ranjit Singh would give *ijara* only to selected few. He even denied giving *ijara* to those whom he considered incompetent. Sometimes the Maharaja gave *ijara* of certain areas to those who were reluctant to accept that. He never invited bids from the prospective *ijaradars*. *Ijaradars* under Ranjit Singh were bound to operate within the frame-work of state policy and in case of default, they were fined, transferred and also imprisoned. In contrast with the earlier practice, his *ijaradars* were by and large state functionaries : *nazim*, *kardars*, *jagirdars*, courtiers and men connected with revenue administration. The main object of the state in farming out the areas was to collect the revenue in cash (in advance) without much extra expense. Since the *ijaradars* had to make their own arrangements for the assessment and collection of revenues, this was certainly economical from the point of view of the state. But economies were not effected at the cost of the well-being of cultivators.

30. Radha Sharma, *Peasantry and the State*, p.135.

31. Fauja Singh, *State and Society*, p.184.

## JOURNEY FROM HARYANA TO BRAJ—A CASE STUDY OF SAINT SURDAS

(Mrs.) Bindu Mattoo \*

Surdas was born eight miles from the city of Delhi in the village called Sihini<sup>1</sup> (near Ballabhgarh) in the year 1478. He was the fourth son of a poor Sarasvata brahman. The *Surdas Ki Varta* text records that the child was born blind, and this fact was the source of endless misery to his father who worried all the time who would take care and guide his sightless boy in his life.<sup>2</sup>

The child Surdas had to face much humiliation because of his disability. Even his own kith and kin were not kind to him. But none realized that the child was gifted with an extraordinary ability to divine things which ordinary mortals could not foresee. At the age of six he helped his father locate the gold coins which had been gifted to him by a wealthy *kshatriya* of the village and which a rat had hid in a hole in the roof of the house. Thereafter the child of six left his home with a stick in his hand and the name of Lord God in his heart. He walked for about eight miles and reached the outskirts of another village. Here he took shelter under the shade of a *pipal* tree. His ability to divine things came to his rescue once again. He helped a brahman zamindar in locating his lost-cows. The zamindar was so impressed by him that he ordered his men to build a hut for him and also sent a servant.

Word spread far and wide that Surdas had an unusual gift of divination. The crowds of believers increased. They treated him with respect and brought many gifts of food and drink for him. He was given a large house in place of the hut. People called him *swami* and many men became his followers. Surdas

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1. "Surdas ki Varta", ed. Kanthmani Shastri, *Ashtachhap ki Varta*, Kankroli, 1941; 2nd edition, 1952, p. 3.
2. *Ibid.*, p.5; K. D. Sharma is of the different opinion. He remarks, "the internal evidence tells a different story. His poetry is so rich in visual imagery and reveals such vividness of observation that nobody can really believe that it is not based on first hand experience." K. D. Sharma, "Life and Works of Surdas", ed. Nagendra, *Surdasa : His Mind and Art*, Delhi, 1978, p. 12.

loved to recite to his followers the *padas* of *viraha*. Days, months and years passed, and Surdas reached his eighteenth year.<sup>3</sup> Once again the desire to renounce the world became strong and overwhelmed him so much that he left his worldly possessions to his parents and with only a stick in his hand moved towards Braj. Later on he entered Braj area and arrived at the Vishrantghat in the city of Mathura. But finally, he was settled at *Gaughat* on the Yamuna river midway between Mathura and Agra.

Surdas's childhood and formative years in Haryana are very important for the student of history. During these years he experienced abject poverty during his childhood. When he saw and experienced the poverty and misery this left a deep impact on his mind. During his stay at *Gaughat* where he was leading the life of a recluse, this was a part of his mental make up. In later years these memories of hard realities must have played their part as a powerful influence on his mind when he composed *padas*, portrayed- implicitly or explicitly – the miserable and pathetic condition of the people he knew so well.

In 1510 A.D. Vallabhacharya, whose permanent abode was the village Araila across the river Yamuna near Allahabad, in his visit to Braj, halted at *Gaughat* where Surdas was residing and had become popular around the area. Vallabhacharya initiated him with his companions into his *sampradaya*. His doctrine was known as *pushtivad*.<sup>4</sup> As the ritualism of *pusti-marga* is centred round worship and recitations, Vallabhacharya thought that Surdas was the most suitable person to perform these duties. Thereafter he spent the rest of his life in the service of the Shri Nath temple. He stayed at a nearby hamlet known as Parasoli and breathed his last there, probably in the year 1583 A.D.<sup>5</sup>

The followers of *pushti-marga* have preserved narratives of a large number of selected saints of their sect, the chief of them being *Chaurasi*

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3. *Ibid.*, p. 11. The account of Surdas' life is based on the "Surdas ki Varta". *loc. cit.* Except *Varta* no other authentic material is available to help us in this regard. Whatever material, other than the *Varta*, is extant can at best be taken as intelligent guesswork. K. D. Sharma, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
  4. Vallabhacharya's doctrine is known as *pushtivad*. According to him, the path of devotion is superior to that of knowledge. The feeling of devotion through which we realize Krishna is in itself, for the devotee, the grace and favour of Lord Krishna. This Grace is to quote Vallabhacharya is *pushti* i.e. sustenance. Savitri Sinha and R. D. Misra, "Development of Hindi Language". ed. Nagendra. *Hindi Literature*. Delhi, 1968, p. 616.
  5. Prabhu Dayal Mectal. *Ashtachhap Parichay*. Mathura, 1949, p. 117.

*Vaishnavan ki Varta* (The life accounts of 84 Vaishnavites) and *Do Sau Bavan Vaishnavan ki Varta* (The life accounts of 252 Vaishnavites). Out of these eight devotees, who occupy a more important place, are known as *ashtachhap*.<sup>6</sup> Kanthmani Shastri's *Ashtachhap ki Varta* is based on the two original *Vartas*. It is a detailed account of the members of *ashtachhap* founded by Bithalnath in 1545 A.D.

Three works have been attributed in the name of Surdas namely : *Sursagar*, *Sursarawali* and *Sahitya Lahri*.<sup>7</sup> *Sursagar* is in a way an anthology of his total poetic output. It is said to have contained about one lakh twenty five thousand verses but so far not more than five thousand verses have been authenticated. The main thrust of *Sursagar* is the depiction of the divine sports of Shri Krishna (*lilagan*) as given in the tenth chapter of the *Bhagwata*. *Sursarawali* represents the gist of *Sursagar*. In this the poet has highlighted Krishna's heroic character. The central theme of *Sahitya Lahri* is the mutual love of Radha and Krishna.

Outwardly, these writings are the product of a man who had abjured the world and taken refuge in God's name. But, when studied closely, they are the outcome of certain influences on the mind of its writer. When Surdas cries in agony *Kou nrip hoi hum hi ka hani* <sup>8</sup>, he is only voicing the indifference born out of the helpless condition of the people around him. Surdas raises his hands in prayer to God and expresses his helplessness and requests Him for help because the Lord alone can uplift weak human beings from their state of helplessness. They cannot resist and oppose the worldly rulers and look upon God as their only saviour.<sup>9</sup> This reveals a state of desperation on the part of the people. They find no other place of refuge except the Lord himself. In other words, Surdas' above lines though simple in appearance, are a reflection of the state of affairs around him.

Abul Fazl considered the sovereign as *insanu'l kamil* i.e., the perfect man.<sup>10</sup> But Surdas' literature rejects this apotheosis. According to him, the perfect

6. Four disciples of Vallabhacharya- Surdas, Parmananddas, Kumbhandas and Krishnadas with four disciples of his son Bithalnath- Nanddas, Chaturbhujdas, Govindswami and Chhitswami became the celebrated *ashtachhap* or the eight seals or die stamps, because the poems they produced are regarded as standards for Braj Bhasha in which they wrote.

7. K. D. Sharma, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

8. Surdas, *Sursagar*, ed. & tr. Hardev Bahari and Rajendra Kumar, Allahabad, 1974, 1/99.

9. *Ibid.*, 2/30.

10. Abul-Fazl, *The Akbar Nama*, tr. H. Beveridge, Vol. II, Delhi, 1902; rpt. 1989, p. 421.

man is not the king but anyone on whom the Lord showers his blessings.<sup>11</sup> It is He who is perfect and all inclusive. This goes against any theory of human perfection. Even kings, says Surdas, who look upon themselves as great and all powerful, are reduced to nonentity before Him. Ravana who was the greatest of kings, sunk to nothingness before Him and his pride and greatness vanished in his presence. No one is really fortunate, except he on whom He showers his blessings. No one was so ugly as Kubja, but once she secured His attention, she became the most fortunate person in the world.<sup>12</sup>

It reflects not only people's loss of faith in the worldly great persons but also marks a change in the minds of the people about social grouping. Accordingly, a person is great not because of his birth but because of his actions and God's favour. God does not care for the caste and *gotra* of his worshipper.<sup>13</sup> Thus, a change in the minds and thoughts of the people, howsoever slow, was certainly taking place. But in spite of a change in the air, the society, as it then was, was marked by social distinctions. This is evident from a verse of the *Sursagar*, which has a reference to the distinction between a *brahman* and a *sudra*. It is stated that the distinction between the highest and the lowest was like the difference between the crow and the swan; the smell of camphor and garlic; gold and the glass; *sindhur* and the *geru*; the meals of the *brahman* and the *sudra*.<sup>14</sup> Surdas generally accepts the caste system to be the basis of society. He firmly believes that the essence of *bhakti* is love and complete devotion to the will of God.

Surdas gives a detailed description of the society in the context of Braj. He says that Braj region was eighty-four kos (168 miles) in length and breadth.<sup>15</sup> He calls Braj a *pargana* with Nanda as its *shiqdar*.<sup>16</sup> Nanda has also been described as *thakur* who dominated ten villages.<sup>17</sup> Surdas is primarily a poet of rural life. He describes the village artisans and people who form the village community. The social classes and groups that have been referred to in the

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11. *Sursagar*, 1/35.

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid.*, 1/11.

14. Surdas, *Sursagar*, ed. Nanddulare Bajpai, Varanasi, 1976, 10/3152.

15. *Ibid.*, 1/11.

16. Surdas, *Sursagar*, ed. Nanddulare Bajpai, Varanasi, 1976, 10/3152.

17. *Ibid.*, 10/1459.

16. *Ibid.*, 10/1497

17. *Ibid.*, 10/1503.

*Sursagar* are the *Ahirs*<sup>18</sup>, the *banjaras*<sup>19</sup>, the *bajajs*<sup>20</sup>, the *pansaries*,<sup>21</sup> the *sunar*<sup>22</sup>, the *badai*<sup>23</sup>, the *Kumhar*<sup>24</sup>, the *Rangrej*<sup>25</sup>, the *teli*<sup>26</sup> or the oil crusher, the *Kevat*<sup>27</sup>, the *Jariyyas*<sup>28</sup>, the *chitrakar*<sup>29</sup>, the *nain*<sup>30</sup>, the *barini*<sup>31</sup> or the leaf cup maker and seller, the *tamolini*<sup>32</sup> or the beetal seller, the *dai*<sup>33</sup> or the midwife, the *dhai*<sup>34</sup> or the foster mother, the *ganika*<sup>35</sup> or the prostitute, the *dhadhni*<sup>36</sup> or the person who come to shower blessings on auspicious occasions, the *nat* or the rope dancer and the *bajigar*<sup>37</sup>, *magadh*, *sut*, *bhat*<sup>38</sup> or the bards, the *jjotishis*<sup>39</sup> and the *kasai*<sup>40</sup>.

For Surdas, Braj was, an idyllic pastrol, full of joy and love, brotherhood. No sorrow touched them—except the pangs of love for Krishna suffered by the *gopis*.<sup>41</sup> The people of Braj have surrendered themselves so completely to the will of their Lord—Lord Krishna—that life appears meaningless to them without

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18. *Ibid.*, 10/3663.

19. *Ibid.*, 10/1473.

20. *Sursagar* (Venkteshwar Press), p. 349. Quoted from Mayarani Tandon, *Ashtachhap Kavya Ka Sanskritik Mulayankan*. Lucknow, 1960, p. 441.

21. *Sursagar* (sabha), 10/1473.

22. *Ibid.*, 10/40.

23. *Ibid.*, 10/41.

24. *Ibid.* (Sabha), 10/3781.

25. *Ibid.*, 10/2485.

26. *Ibid.*, 10/102.

27. *Ibid.*, 9/41.

28. *Ibid.*, 10/41.

29. *Ibid.*

30. *Ibid.*, 10/40.

31. *Ibid.*, 10/19.

32. *Ibid.*, 10/1075.

33. *Sursagar*, (sabha), 10/40.

34. *Ibid.*, 10/3175.

35. *Sursagar*, 1/34.

36. *Ibid.*, 10/37.

37. *Ibid.*, 10/293.

38. *Ibid.*, 10/28.

39. *Ibid.*, 10/86.

40. *Ibid.*, 10/57.

41. Savitri Chandra Shoba, "Social life and attitudes as reflected in the works of Surdasa", ed. Nagendra, *Surdasa—His Mind and Art*, p. 27.

recognizing his existence all the time and everywhere. In comparison to the life of the people of Braj, Surdas depicts a very miserable condition of the rural peasants. The terms *kisan* <sup>42</sup>, *khetihar* <sup>43</sup>, *hakan hare* <sup>44</sup> and *raiya* <sup>45</sup> have been used for the cultivator. He says that villagers are very hard workers and make all effort to change the barren land into cultivable land.<sup>46</sup> He holds a very negative view about the revenue officials whom he regards responsible for the poor condition of the peasantry. We come to know that peasants had a very low opinion of the government revenue officials like *patwari*, *mustaufi*, *amil*, *munshis*, etc. *Sursagar* tells us that the peasants nurtured the view that the officials were absolutely callous towards them. The *patwaris* generally maintained false records.<sup>47</sup> The *munshis* were made to add unpaid revenue of the previous year to the revenue of the current year and false accounts were entered in the register known as *minjalik* <sup>48</sup>. This was not all. The *Kotwal* and the *amin* used the force of their office to pressurize the peasant to extract payment from him. The poor peasant finding himself surrounded by the *ahdis*, readily handed over whatever was demanded of him. Peasant had an eerie feeling that he was in the midst of the agents of death (*yamdut*) and that it was impossible for him to save himself.<sup>49</sup> The poor farmer, already in the grip of the revenue officials was finally exploited by the *thakur* to his utmost capacity.<sup>50</sup>

From the above description, it is clear that in the writings of Surdas on one hand we find the description of the people of Braj who have surrendered themselves completely to the will of their Lord Krishna who is the be all and end all of all their pursuits. On the other hand they are extremely solicitous about their welfare and through the description of society specially by depicting the condition of peasantry Surdas has reflected the harsh realities of his times.

Surdas is a saint of the Bhakti cult and his numerous *padas* bear testimony to his love for Lord Krishna. But viewed from historical perspective, it is also a fact that each writer is a product of his age, and whatever his ulterior motive,

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42. *Sursagar*. 1/185.

43. *Ibid.*, 1/107.

44. *Ibid.*, 1/185.

45. *Ibid.*, 1/61.

46. *Ibid.*, 1/185.

47. *Ibid.*

48. *Ibid.*, 1/143.

49. *Ibid.*, 1/64.

50. *Ibid.*, 1.185.

the society of the times imperceptibly creeps in, leaving enough scope for the researcher to make substantial observations on the various facets of the times. Morals, manners, customs, economy and what not—enough material for the explorer. But, in the context of Surdas, one fact, which has been systematically ignored is that his portrayals of society must have had their origin in his stay in Haryana (Sihin and neighbouring areas). He spent eighteen years of his life in close proximity to the rural population of Haryana. He was privy to their innermost secrets and day-to-day problems. The problems, obviously enough, were either social or economical. No wonder, Surdas had an insider's view of the conditions of the times, and when he penned his *padas* in later life, all his childhood years must have loomed large on his mental horizon. To conclude, it needs to be stressed that the historical information about different facets of society which one gleans from the writings of Surdas pertains to the present day Haryana and not exclusively to the land of Lord Krishna.

## THE PANCHAYATS IN THE PUNJAB (1849-1947)

Jagdish Pal Singh \*

The villages had existed in India from time immemorial. India is called land of villages. About eighty per cent of people lived in the villages. A village was a relatively self-sufficient unit. The change at the political level little affected the village communities. The village had contacted with state in the matter of the collection of revenue.<sup>1</sup>

The *panchayat* was the main source of executive justice in the village. The *panchayat* was a multipurpose, institution for the administrative and judicial work. The term *panchayat* is a compound of two words : *panch* and *ayat*. The '*panchen*' in Sanskrit stands for the number 'five.' The number five is considered to be sacrosanct in Indian mythology. God created the world out of five elements. It is frequently mentioned that by controlling five senses, one can easily achieve the highest aim of life.<sup>2</sup>

In the Sikh theology reference of the '*panch*' came in a verse of Guru Nanak Dev as-

*Panch parvan panch pradhan I*

*Panche pave darghe maan I I*

Meaning that 'elect are the ones approved by Him; Honoured they are among their fellow-fold.'<sup>3</sup> The villagers considered the *panches*, the five arbitrators as the representative of God. The *panch* constituted the *parameshwar*.

In Sanskrit word *ayatnam* means place or abode. In this sense *panchayat* means an abode of *panches*. In literal sense the *panchayat* had been an organization for the adjudication of disputes.<sup>4</sup>

In Punjabi a *panchayat* was called *parah*. The word was applied not

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1. Raghubir Sahai, *Panchayati Raj in India* : A Study, Allahabad, 1968, p. 107.

2. Rajeshwar Dayal, *Panchayati Raj in India*, Delhi, p. 60.

3. "Elect" *panch* of the original text literally means "five" as also elder of a clan, tribe and fraternity. Five in the Sikh cultural milieu has a religious overtone too, as is apparent from the saying *Panjan Vich Parameshwar*. Cf. S. Randhawa, *Guru Nanak's Jyoti Ji*, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, p. 129.

4. Rajeshwar Dayal, *op cit* p. 60.

only to an assembly of leading men of some tribes, but also to a gathering of men from different tribes to discuss some questions of common local interests.<sup>5</sup>

The village *panchayats* had a unique position in the Punjab's judicial system. These *panchayats* played a pivotal role in the traditional system of executive justice. All the cases of civil and criminal nature were decided through arbitration by *panches* and their decisions were final. The laws applied by the *panchayats* were based on custom, precedents and religion. These were not codified and were often purely local in character and acceptance. In the strict sense, the *panchayat* was not a court of law but of arbitration.<sup>6</sup>

The justice administered by these *panchayats* was quick and simple. The decisions regarding the disputes were effective and applicable. The decrees of these *panchayats* held sway, through the all pervading authority of the *panches*.<sup>7</sup>

The institution of the *panchayats* was in flourishing state under Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The local customs and usages were reliable sources for executing the justice. In villages criminal as well as civil cases were decided by the *panchayats*. The *panchayats* discharged their duties effectively.<sup>8</sup> The influence of the *panchayats* could be seen in military affairs of Khalsa Army. There were regimental *panchayats* in the Sikh army. As a general rule the troops were obedient to their appointed officers, but the concerted action of each regiment and brigade was invariably regulated by a *panchayat*.<sup>9</sup>

In social matters, the tribal organization was strong, but when caste question, especially some question connected with marriage was decided, a *panchayat* of the tribes was summoned, which was attended by tribes men from the neighbouring villages.<sup>10</sup> The number of *panches* was not important in the social matters. The mode of the business in which the disputes were discussed and disposed off was vague and indefinite. The *panchayats* were guided by the opinions of the elders and decision was acquired in by all. The decree of the *panchayat* had a binding nature for the parties because it was a matter of social

5. J. Wilson, *General Code of Tribal Custom in Sirsa District of the Punjab*, Calcutta, 1883. pp. 50-51.
6. Michael Edwards, *Raj – The story of British India*, pp. 88-89.
7. Ratna Ghosh. Alok Kumar Pramanik, *Panchayat System in India*, New Delhi, 1999, p. 72.
8. Bhagat Singh, *Sikh Polity. The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, New Delhi. 1976, p. 253.
9. A. H. Bingley, *Sikhs*, Department of Languages, Punjab. Patiala, 1970. National Book Shop, Delhi. 1985, p. 34.
10. J. Wilson, "General Code of Tribal Customs in Sirsa District of the Punjab". p. 82.

respect. The only way in which a *panchayat* could enforce its decision was to excommunicated a disobedient tribes man (*Huqqa Pani band karna*) refusing to eat, drink or smoke with him or to inter-marry with his family, until he obeyed the order of the *panchayat* and pays the penalty they imposed.<sup>11</sup>

John Malcolm holds a very high opinion about this institution, which has survived all revolution and dynastic changes. Referring to the institution of *panchayat*, he says, "This court was a high character for justice."<sup>12</sup> He advocated retaining the integrity of the institution of *panchayat* under British rule. Urging the preservation of *panchayats* he further says, "if we desire to conciliate the natives or to benefit their aid we must adopt a system that is familiar and intelligible to them; and as the ground work of that, we must preserve and restore the court of *panchayat*."<sup>13</sup>

After annexation of the Punjab, the British consolidated their rule by an organized administrative net-work. The institution of *panchayat* was properly utilized by the British for the advantage of all. The district level officials got help from *panchayats* for deciding the civil, criminal and revenue cases.<sup>14</sup>

The maintenance of peace was generally facilitated by the judicial institutions. The distinguishing mark of the Lawrence administration in the Punjab at that time was the simplicity of the court of justice, their cheapness, accessibility, promptness, the exclusion of the pleaders and the recognition of the village *panchayats*.<sup>15</sup>

The Board, while introducing written law and establishing a net work of court did not supercede the village *panchayats*. Rather the Board reformed the *panchayats* and gave them official support. The Lawrence brothers were firmly of the opinion that every endeavour should be made to preserve these 'Indian Juries.' The Board believed that if the discredit should be thrown on the system of *panchayat* and the faith of the people in their best institutions be shaken and their morality will thereby weakened.<sup>16</sup>

The Board framed a detailed code of rules to regulate the proceeding of

11. *Ibid.*

12. John Malcolm, *Sketch of the Sikhs*, pp. 127-28; see also N. M. Khilnani, *British Power in the Punjab 1839-1858*, Bombay, 1972, p. 102.

13. John Malcolm, *Memories of Central India*, Vol. II, p. 283; See also N. M. Khilnani, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

14. S. S. Thorburn, *The Punjab in Peace and War*, New Delhi, 1904, p. 167.

15. N. M. Khilnani, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

16. *The First Punjab Administrative Report*, p. 76; see also, N. M. Khilnani, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

the *panches*. The district officers were instructed to superintend the working of the *panchayat*. The appointment of the arbitrators, the conduct of the inquiry, the mode of recording the award, were carefully supervised by the Deputy Commissioners from time to time.<sup>17</sup>

Up to the end of Commissionership in the Punjab the *panchayat* system served to British purpose efficiently. After the uprising of 1857 the changes were brought in the administration. A highly centralized bureaucratic system of administration which was already established became more rigid. A new hierarchy of the courts was set up for administering the justice. The grip of law became firmer. The voice of public opinion ceased to have authority.<sup>18</sup>

With the advent of British rule, the self-sufficiency and village autonomy was broken. The *panchayat* system received a severe set-back. S. S. Thorburn remarked, the fact is melancholy that throughout India, the consolidation of British rule has invariably been the death-warrant for indigenous institutions dependent on the power of popular opinion and consequently killed the village communities and *panchayat* system.<sup>19</sup>

The British brought a complicated legal system with the extension of Code of Civil Procedure in the year of 1866. At the same time, a new structure of courts was established, with the chief court at top level. The new legal system destroyed the village autonomy and the *panchayat* system was uprooted. A simple dispute came to the law courts.<sup>20</sup> There was an unprecedented growth in institution of suits in the courts. In civil cases only the number increased more than double during 1863-72.<sup>21</sup>

From the year 1870, India saw the dawn of representative local institutions. Lord Mayo's resolution of 1870 was the first attempt to revive the Local Self-Government in India. The resolution gave impetus to the development of local institutions by enlarging their powers and responsibilities. In 1873, Charles Trevelyan advocated the building up a 'pyramid' pattern of representative councils. The famous resolution of Lord Ripon of May 18, 1882, was a landmark

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17. *Ibid*

18. S.S. Thorburn. *The Punjab in Peace and War*, p. 167.

19. *Ibid*

20. Master Hari Singh. *Agrarian Scene in British Punjab*. New Delhi, p. 39.

21. 1863....97,735 1872....217,926. Ram Lal Handa, *A History of the Development of the Judiciary in the Punjab, 1846-1884*, Punjab Government Publications, Lahore, p. 50.

in the development of Local Self-Government.<sup>22</sup> His resolution advocated decentralization of the administration through the local bodies and provided the much needed democratic framework to these institutions. This scheme was not put into practice. Local Self-Government received a boost with the appointment of Royal Commission on Decentralisation in 1907 under the chairmanship of C.E.H. Hobhouse. The chairman viewed that local government should start from the village level rather than the district level.<sup>23</sup>

The beginning of the statutory *panchayats* in place of the decadent traditional *panchayats* in the Punjab can be traced to the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Decentralization. The Commission recommended the constitution and development of the village *panchayats* possessed with certain administrative powers with jurisdiction in petty civil and criminal cases and financed by a position of the land cess, special grants, receipts from village cattle ponds and markets and small fees on civil suits. This proposal was favourably commended by the Government of India.<sup>24</sup> The Commission recognized that any policy establishing *panchayat* would require great care and discretion. The commission recommended general principles as follows :

- i) Legislation, when necessary, should be permissive and general. The power and duties of *panchayats* whether administrative or judicial need not and indeed, should not be identical in every village.
- ii) In area where it is considered desirable to confer judicial as well as administrative functions upon *panchayats* the same body should exercise both functions.
- iii) The jurisdiction of *panchayats* in judicial cases should ordinarily be permissive but in order to provide inducement to litigant persons wishing to have, their cases decided by *panchayats*. For instance, court fee, if levied should be small, technicalities in procedure should be avoided and possibly a speedier execution on decree be permitted.<sup>25</sup>

The Punjab *Panchayat* Act of 1912 was the first legislative attempt for the revival of the *panchayats* in the province. The

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22. Ratna Ghosh, Alok Kumar Pramanik, *Panchayat System in India*, p. 210.

23. B. K. Chandrashekhar (ed.), *Panchayat Raj in India*, Status Report 1999, Rajiv Gandhi

24. *India's Local Self-Government Policy, 1915*, Royal Commission on Decentralization, Government Printings, Calcutta, 1915.

25. *Ibid.*

rules and regulations were framed for establishment, jurisdiction, procedure and removal of the *panchayats*. The Local Government by notification can establish a *panchayat*, to fix jurisdiction, constitution and quorum for the meetings. The Deputy Commissioner was given the power of removal and suspension of a member after prescription given by the Local Government. The pecuniary limit of the jurisdiction of the *panchayat* was Rs. 200. The *panchayat* got jurisdiction in respect of the following types of cases, viz., the claims for money due on contracts or for movable property, or the value of such property; when the debt or demand or compensation does not exceed in amount or value the sum of Rs. 200.<sup>26</sup> The procedure was quick and simple and without any technicalities. No legal practitioner was permitted to appear in any proceeding before a *panchayat*.<sup>27</sup> The aim of the Act was disposal of petty civil suits by the *panchayats*.

According to provisions of the Act, *panchayat* was a nominated rural institution which highly restricted functions. The hesitant attitude of the government in regard to its establishment in various villages was obvious as only 16 *panchayats* well established in the province by 1916 while there were as many as 36,000 villages.<sup>28</sup>

This attempt was unsuccessful. By the year 1917 the *Panchayat Act* became a dead letter, because of the half hearted measures of the British Government.<sup>29</sup> The district judge of Jalandhar considered that the *panchayat* system was an anachronism. It was mere an artificial attempt to put back the hands of the clock.<sup>30</sup> The *panchayat* had no authority to take up cases referred to them by one party without consent of the other. Thus the village *panchayat* Act could not prove successful.<sup>31</sup>

The Montagu-Chelmsford Report, 1918 recognized the prospect of

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26. *Punjab Gazette*, Punjab Government Legislative Department, March 17, 1911, p. 63.

27. *Ibid.*

28. B. S. Khanna, *Working of Village Agencies with Special Reference to People's Participation: A Study in Village Institution, Punjab*, Chandigarh, p. 8.

29. T. K. Mann, *Administration of Justice in India – A Case Study of Punjab*, New Delhi, 1979, p. 76.

30. *The Report on the Administration of Civil Justice in the Punjab for the Year 1916*, pp. 8-9.

31. *The Report on the Administration of Civil Justice in the Punjab for the Calendar Year 1917*, Para 12.

successfully developing *panchayat* must depend very largely on local conditions and the functions and powers to be allotted to them must vary accordingly; but where the system proved a success, it was contemplated that they might be endowed with civil and criminal jurisdiction in petty cases. The report suggested: some administrative powers as regards sanitation and education and permissive powers of imposing a local rate wherever possible and complete possible popular control in local bodies.<sup>32</sup> The Local Self-Government was categorized as a 'transferred' subject under the Government of India Act, 1919. It was an opportunity for the popular ministries of the provinces to take steps to establish *panchayats* through their legislative measures. In Punjab *panchayats* were constituted by the village *panchayat* Act, 1921 (Act III of 1922) as amended by Act X of 1922. The provisions of the Act were enlarged from the *panchayat* Act of 1912. The bureaucratic control, however, was cause of concern. The deputy commissioner of every district was empowered to establishment, jurisdiction and dissolution of *panchayat*. The *panchayats* were conferred with civil as well as criminal jurisdiction. No legal practitioner was permitted to appear or plead before a *panchayat* and no appeal lay against its decisions. The Deputy Commissioner or Collector of every district was empowered to establish a *panchayat* for any village or group of villages. The *panchayat* consisted of not less than five *panches* including a *sarpanch*. All of whom were appointed.<sup>33</sup> The Collector can also suspend or dissolve any *panchayat* for neglect of duty, misconduct, or other sufficient cause, with written approval of the Commissioner. A public servant serving in the district of the *panchayat* could neither file a complaint nor be tried in the *panchayat*. Similarly, the *panchayat* could not try a suit by or against the government or a public servant in his official capacity, or by or against a minor or a person of unsound mind, or a suit on account of any disputes concerning revenue or effecting any interest in immovable property or for a balance of partnership account or for a share under an intestacy or for legacy under a will. The Collector could call for the record and inspect the same and other registers of *panchayat*.<sup>34</sup> The *Panchayat* Act of 1922 was not proved fruitful one, it also failed. The reason seems to be that by this period the

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32. Ratna Ghosh, Alok Kumar Pramānik, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

33. Harihar Prasad Dubey, *A History of Judicial System of India and Some Foreign Countries*, Bombay, p. 333.

34. *Ibid.*

British popularized their judicial system at the expense of the traditional system.<sup>35</sup>

In the national movement for political freedom, village *panchayats* were central to its ideological framework. Gandhi Ji categorically defined his vision of village *panchayats* in the following words :

My idea of village *swaraj* is that it is a complete republic independent of its neighbours for its own vital wants and yet interdependence for many other in which dependence is a necessity... The Government of the village will be conducted by the *panchayat* of five persons annually elected by the adult villagers, males and females possessing minimum qualifications. These will have all the authority and jurisdiction required. Since there will be no system of punishment in the accepted sense, the *panchayat* will be the legislature, judiciary, and executive combined to operate for its year of office.<sup>36</sup>

The promulgation of further constitutional reforms in the Punjab in 1937 under the Government of India Act, 1935, provided the constitution and political milieu for more decentralization of powers to the *panchayat* for more democratization of its structure and for an accelerated extension of *panchayat* system in the rural areas.<sup>37</sup>

A new *panchayat* Act for this purpose was passed in 1939, known as the Punjab Village *Panchayat* Act of 1939. This Act was a comprehensive legislation in nature and context. The constitution, jurisdiction and procedure of functioning were defined for a *panchayat*. A *panchayat* was to consist of *panches* not less than three and more than seven. The *panches* shall be elected from the inhabitants of the *panchayati* area. The term of a *panchayat* was one year. One member of a *panchayat* was elected as *sarpanch* or chairman and a *naib-Sarpanch*. A *panchayat* could try civil cases up to the value of Rs. 200. No legal practitioner was permitted to appear and plead before a *panchayat*.<sup>38</sup> The magistrates were required to transfer any case to a *panchayat* cognizable by it. A *panchayat* may impose a fine not exceeding Rs. 50 for any offence. The Government may, however, empower a *panchayat* to impose a fine up to Rs. 200. The code of civil procedure, the code of criminal procedure and the Indian Evidence Act do

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35. T. K. Mann, *Administration of Justice in India. A Case Study of the Punjab*, p. 76.

36. George Mathew, *Panchayati Raj from Legislation to Movement*, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 1994, p. 5.

37. B. S. Khanna, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

38. *Government Gazette*, Punjab Legislative Department, Part (IV), p. 62.

not apply to any case in the *panchayat*.<sup>39</sup>

The formation of popular ministries in 1937 was marked with significant developments. They undertook legislations to make local bodies truly representative of people. Unfortunately, however, the initial zeal of the ministries to make these institutions popular was jeopardized with the out-break of World War-II.<sup>40</sup>

During the year of 1937-38 total number of *panchayats* was 1275 as against 1,147 in previous year in the Punjab. The total number of criminal cases tried by *panchayats* was 5,395 against 3,655 in the previous year. Most of cases were of trivial nature and reconciliation. The number of civil suits tried by *panchayats* was 13,926. More than 90 per cent of them related to claims on contracts, which included debt and claims of menials for wages.<sup>41</sup> The number of *panchayats* in the Punjab increased from 1489 in 1938-39 to 7853 in 1945-46. After partition 4,414 *panchayats* came to Indian Punjab.<sup>42</sup>

Thus before British rule in the Punjab, the *panchayat* system played an important role in the administration of justice. Even in the beginning of their rule the British correlated the *panchayat* system in the administration of the province. They gradually and systematically set up a highly centralized administration, which proved a death-knell for the traditional *panchayat* system. The British ignored the *panchayat* system because they popularized their own English judicial system. Consequently, the courts flooded with the petty civil suits. The costly British legal system was a reason for the rural indebtedness in the Punjab. The legislations, which were passed for the revival of the *panchayats* did not prove successful. The half-hearted attempts, lack of British administrative official interest and poor implementation were reasons responsible for the failure of legislative attempts of *panchayat* Acts.

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39. Harihar Prasad Dubey. *op. cit.*, p. 331.

40. B. K. Chandrashekhra. *op. cit.*, p. 4.

41. *Report on the Working of Panchayats for the Year 1937-38*, pp. 1-2.

42. B. S. Khanna. *op. cit.*, p. 8.

## THE UNIONISTS, CONGRESS AND MASTER TARA SINGH

(1935-42 A.D.)

Jaspreet Kaur

The period from 1935 to 1942 is an important phase in the history of Punjab. Through the Act of 1935, which included the Communal Award, provincial autonomy was introduced in Punjab. Sikhs felt very much upset because it converted the statutory majority of the Muslims in the Punjab into a functional reality and they were worried over the prospects of their existence after the introduction of the provincial autonomy in the Punjab. It was a period when Master Tara Singh as leader of the Sikhs adopted various strategies to keep the Sikh interests safe while dealing with the Unionists and the Congress Party. Till now, he had always emphasized the necessity to maintain cordial relations with the Congress; be it the question of Nehru Report or the participation in the Non-Cooperation Movement or the participation in the Round Table Conference. But it was the Congress stand on the Communal Award and some other questions relating to Sikhs vis-a-vis Muslims that Masterji was inclined to adopt an independent course for the Shiromani Akali Dal to safeguard Sikh interests.

Despite being against the Communal Award, the Shiromani Akali Dal decided to contest the elections being held under the said Act. For contesting the elections the efforts for compromise between the Chief Khalsa Diwan and the Shiromani Akali Dal could not materialize and a faction of Central Akali Dal under Giani Sher Singh and the loyalists group among the Sikhs organized themselves under the banner of the Khalsa National Party. There were two other main contestants in fray for the elections: the Unionist Party and the Congress Party. Master Tara Singh wanted the Congress to declare its attitude over Communal Award before any co-operation in the forth-coming elections is discussed. He wrote a letter to Jawahar Lal Nehru in this regard on 10 September 1936. In its reply the Congress party did not assure its help over the questions raised by Master Tara Singh but Jawahar Lal Nehru expressed sympathy with the Sikhs.<sup>1</sup> In view of the imminent Muslim domination in the province by the

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1. S. Gopal (ed.), *Selected Works of Jawahar Lal Nehru*, Vol. III, p. 386.

provisions of the new act, the Akali circles were anxious to secure the support of the Congress with the view to strengthening their position in the province. Moreover the Akali programme was identical with the Congress policy, which was to wreck the constitution and work for complete independence. So the pressure from the pro-Congress section of the Akalis as well as the immediate need of hour forced Master Tara Singh to reach on agreement on the distribution of seats with Congress.

The February 1937 elections of the Punjab Assembly resulted in a clear-cut majority for the Unionist party. In these elections the Unionists won 88, Congress 15, Khalsa National Party 12 and Akali Party 10 seats<sup>2</sup>. Despite being in absolute majority Sir Sikander the leader of the Unionist Party decided to seek co-operation of other parties including the Khalsa National Party. Sir Sunder Singh Majithia, leader of the party become minister in the government.<sup>3</sup> Immediately after establishing their government in the province, the Unionist with the help of Khalsa National Party, raided and carried out searches of the residential quarters of several leading Akali leaders including that of Master Tara Singh, Giani Gurmukh Singh Musafir etc. and the office of the Shiromani Akali Dal, Shajeed Sikh Missionary College, Amritsar and Khalsa College, Bombay etc. Several Civil Suits were also registered against the Akalis in the Gurdwara Judicial Commission accusing them of embezzlement and misuse of Gurdwara funds. A criminal case was also registered against Masterji under section 409 during this period.<sup>4</sup> These acts by the Unionist Government created apprehensions in the minds of the Sikhs and consequently the leading of the Sikh public towards the Akalis increased.

In the very first year of his rule in July, 1937 Sir Sikander called a Unity Conference of leaders from almost all political parties. Master Tara Singh took part in it as a representative of Shiromani Akali Dal. Over the question of singing in a procession, which is passing near a Mosque, Masterji and Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia exchanged hot words and the Unity Conference ended in a failure.<sup>5</sup> Master Tara Singh became a thorn in the eyes of the Coalition Government as he also refused to compromise on the issue of possession of

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2. K. C. Gulati, *The Akalis Past and Present*, Delhi, 1974, p. 75.

3. Durlab Singh, 'The Valiant Fighter' in Virender Grover (ed.) *Political Thinkers of Modern India* Series 28, Delhi, 1995, p. 70.

4. Ibid., p. 71.

5. Master Tara Singh, 'Panth Sahmne Gupt Gondan Da Bhanda Main Bhann-da Han' (I demolish the vessel full of lies), *Akali Patrika*, 24 June, 1938.

Shahidganj Gurdwara. The issue of Shahidganj Gurdwara created tension and bad blood between the Unionist and Master Tara Singh and dominated the Punjab politics till the start of the World War-II.

The Unionist Government tried all means to handover the place to the Muslims, but Master Tara Singh at the helm of affairs refused to submit the possession of the Gurdwara to the Muslims. Sir Sikander called the leaders of the various communities at another Unity Conference in July 1937. Masterji opposed the move as he had lost faith in the good intentions of Sir Sikander and believed that these efforts were to strengthen the Muslim position and to build a Muslim rule in Punjab. He wrote, "You understand very well that Sikhs will not submit to personal communal inequalities or recognize the social and political supremacy of the Muslims in the province. While you profess that you are making efforts for establishing unity in the province through Unity Committees, we apprehend as stated above that all this is to consolidate the Muslim position and to establish Muslim domination in the Punjab."<sup>6</sup> According to Masterji, Sir Sikander had hinted him that the criminal case under Section 409 which was lying pending against him would be withdrawn in case Masterji agreed on a compromise over the question of Shahidganj. He also assured him that Khalsa National Party would not contest Gurdwara elections against them.<sup>7</sup> In the meantime the Lahore High Court and the Privy Council delivered their judgement in favour of the Sikhs.<sup>8</sup>

The legal and moral position of the Muslims in respect of the issue was extremely weak, so the Unionist government could not do much to help them. Sir Sikander even resorted to 'Dinner Diplomacy' and invited leaders of both communities to dinner at various unity communities at his place and tried to diffuse the situation. But the problem remained inflammable as before. The outbreak of the World War-II in September 1939 and the launching of Pakistan Plan in March 1940 by the Muslims League altered the situation in the Punjab and the attention of both the parties was diverted from this issue."<sup>9</sup>

The Congress attitude during the whole affair was much disappointing to Masterji. According to him he has met no Congress man who does not consider the Sikh position right on the Shahidganj issue. But it has neither passed any

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6. N.N. Mitra (ed.) *Indian Annual Register*, Vol. II, 1938, p. 227.

7. *Akali Patrika*, 24 June, 1938.

8. Durlabh Singh, *The Valiant Fighter*, p. 74.

9. M.S. Sahni, *Sikh Politics 1920-1947*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Punjabi University, Patiala 1982, p. 228

resolution in this regard nor sent any volunteers according to its earlier principles of protection of the minority rights."<sup>10</sup>

The Shahidganj issue gave birth to another communal issue and the cause of tension between the Sikhs and the Muslims. There was also agitation over the restrictions on carrying full-sized Kirpans by the Sikh. Punjab Government removed all the restrictions on swords under the Arms act 1887, but restricted the carrying of full sized Sikh swords of Kirpans by the Sikhs. The Morcha lasted till 31<sup>st</sup> January 1936 when the ordinance lapsed automatically. But the Kirpan Morcha also contributed to the embitterment of relations between the Unionists and the Akalis.

On the question of eating Jhatka meat, the Sikhs share in the government services, the freedom of taking out Sikh religious processions, the teaching of Gurmukhi in the schools and holidays on the eve of Gurmurb of the Sikh Gurus were the other important issues which created ill will between the Unionist government and the Sikhs in Punjab. Shiromani Akali Dal under the leadership of Master Tara Singh struggled for the fulfillment of these demands of the Sikhs.

After the Rurka Kalan conference, Master Tara Singh wrote a letter to the Punjab Governor Mr. Henry Craik regarding the grievances of the Sikhs against the government. The Punjab Governor gave an audience to Master Tara Singh to discuss the problems and also called Sir Sikander to the meeting. Nothing concrete came out of this meeting as the Governor tried to convince Master Tara Singh that he is wrong in thinking that his ministers policy at any moment is directed against the Sikhs.<sup>11</sup>

Master Tara Singh was not satisfied with this meeting; so he called the other Akali leaders at Amritsar on 24 March, 1941, and threatened to resort to direct action unless their two demands were met (a) the unconditional release of the Sikhs arrested at Sargodha, (b) establishing a convention that any legislation affecting the religious affairs of a particular community must be presented by the members of the Assembly represented that particular community. On 27 March, Sikander made an important statement in reply to a short notice question in the assembly on the whole subject of the Sikh demands and subsequently withdrew the cases against the Sikhs arrested at Sargodha.<sup>12</sup>

The new constitution had given an added boost to the position of the

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10. Master Tara Singh, 'Baki Partian Nalon Sadha Farak' (Our difference from the rest of the parties), *Akali Patrika*, 15 October, 1936.

11. Linlithgow Collections, Microfilm No. 90, Document number 330, Letter dated 17 March, 1941.

12. *Ibid*.

Muslims in the province, which further increased the anxieties of Master Tara Singh. But his fears were further augmented by the Sikander-Jinnah Pact of October 1937. It was a development of great significance, according to which all Muslim member of the Unionist party would join the Muslim league and would follow its policies in all "All India" matters and would remain independent of Muslim League on the provincial matters."<sup>13</sup>

The Sikander-Jinnah Pact again changed the politics of Punjab because it delivered a great shock to the Hindus and the Sikhs of the Punjab, who considered Sir Sikander as "first a Punjabi and then as a Muslim." It led to an agreement of views among the political Sikh group of loyal and moderate Sikhs and view of Master Tara Singh that Sir Sikander was not practicing non-communal politics.<sup>14</sup> After the pact, Master Tara Singh changed his attitude towards the Congress party and once again the Shiromani Akali Dal called upon all the Sikh members of the Punjab assembly to separate them from the Unionist government and join the Congress party.<sup>15</sup> As a reaction to the Pact Dr. Satyapal, representative of the Punjab Congress, Sir G.C. Narang representative of the Punjab Hindu Sabha and Master Tara Singh representative of the Shiromani Akali Dal reached an alliance with the aim of building a strong opposition to the Sikander and the Muslim League.<sup>16</sup> Master Tara Singh was forced by the circumstances to adopt a policy of cooperation with the Congress, but the relations soon became tense, as both the parties could not fulfill the expectations set upon them.

On 3 September 1939 Great Britain officially announced her entry in the World War-II. The outbreak of the War again brought the sudden changes in the complexion of the Akali Congress relations in Punjab. The Congress decided to boycott the War effort including the recruitment to the armed forces. Master Tara Singh on the other hand was Primarily with the adverse political impact of a Sikh boycott of the War effort. Along with, the demand of the British in 1939 for recruitment had given the Sikhs a chance to preserve and consolidate their traditional place in the army.

Soon after the declaration of War, Sir Sikander Hyatt Khan, the premier of Punjab called upon the important political leaders of Punjab including Master

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13. Stephen Oren. 'The Sikhs. Congress and the Unionists in British Punjab 1937-1945' *Journal of Modern Asian Studies*, 8. 3 (1974), pp. 397-418.

14. *Civil and Military Gazette*, 17 October, 1937.

15. *Ibid.*, 30 October, 1937.

16. *Ibid.*

Tara Singh. But Masterji refused to meet him, as he did not want to strengthen the position of the leader of such party, with whom the Sikhs have a lot of complaints. On 7 September 1939, the Working Committee of Shiromani Akali Dal sent a telegram to the Congress Working Committee meeting at Wardha and hoped that Congress will include the Sikh representatives in all the deliberation and decisions related to War.<sup>17</sup>

Master Tara Singh knew about his obligatory duty to assure and strengthen the status of the Sikhs in the army, but he was bound by the political alignment of the Congress. He therefore wrote a letter to Nehru to know his views on the issue. Nehru in his reply vide letter dated 12 Dec 1939, recognized the importance of the participation of the Sikhs in the army.<sup>18</sup> He refrained from giving Masterji any direction. It therefore remained for him to take the decision. He was on the cross roads, on one side was the Akali relations with the Congress, which was against the British support in the War and on the other side was the task of protecting and strengthening the Sikh position in the army. He tried to persuade Mahatama Gandhi to understand the Sikh Position and the factors which necessitated the Sikh participation in the war effort, but only to receive a categorical and rather strong disapproval from Gandhi in the form of a letter dated 16 Aug 1940. It read, "In my opinion you have nothing in common with the Congress, you believe in the rule of sword, the Congress does not. You have all the time my community in mind. The Congress has no community but the whole nation. Your civil disobedience is purely a branch of violence. I am quite clear in my mind, that being in the Congress you weaken your community and weaken the Congress."<sup>19</sup>

In September 1940, Master Tara Singh announced his withdrawal from the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee and the All India Working Committee. But he declared that he had resigned on personal grounds and other party leaders and workers should continue their duties entrusted upon them by the Congress as the Sikhs as members of a patriotic community will always remain with the Congress in its struggle for freedom.<sup>20</sup> This was the political

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17. *Shriomani Akali Dal di Panth Sewa di Saalana Report (1939)*. Secretary Shriomani Akali Dal, Amritsar, 10 february, 1940, pp. 19-21.

18. N.M.M.L., 'Jawaharlal Nehru's letter to Master Tara Singh', dated 12 December 1939, *Jawaharlal Nehru Papers*, Vol. I, p. 98.

19. *The Tribune*, 14 Oct., 1940.

20. *Ibid.*

strategy that he chose a path consistent with the interests of the Sikhs without weakening the anti-imperialist forces in India. On 16 October 1939 Masterji met the Viceroy Lord Linlithgow on his invitation and appraised of the Sikh position regarding the War and gave a written statement to him.<sup>21</sup> By the beginning of 1941, the Shiromani Akali Dal was finally committed to support the War effort. The Khalsa Defense League was formed on 19 January 1941 under the leadership of Maharaja of Patiala with the encouragement and support particularly of Master Tara Singh and Giani Kartar Singh.<sup>22</sup>

With the Muslim League demand for Pakistan in its Lahore session on March 1940, the outlook of the political parties in Punjab underwent a radical change. The constitutional problems lagged behind and more and more attention began to be given to the evaluation of this scheme.<sup>23</sup>

As of all the communities in the Punjab the Sikhs had the strongest identification with the region, so the resolution had profound impact on their existence. For Master Tara Singh it was the greatest challenge for the survival of his community. The Shiromani Akali Dal under his leadership emerged as the spokesman of the Sikh political opinion against the Pakistan idea and acquired a political identity and dealt independently with all the major parties in Punjab and all India politics.<sup>24</sup>

On the issue of the Pakistan Resolution of the Muslim League the Congress again adopted a policy of neutrality i.e. neither accepted it wholeheartedly nor rejected it thoroughly. On the other hand C. Raja Gopala Chari, a veteran Congress leader with the blessings of Mahatma Gandhi came out with a 'sporting offer' on 23 August, 1940 to persuade his colleagues in the Congress to accept a Muslim League member as Prime Minister with a right to nominate persons of his own choice in the National Government.<sup>25</sup> The offer created the impression that the Congress was willing to go to any length for reaching an agreement with the Muslim League. Masterji considered the offer unjust, undemocratic anti-national and detrimental to the rights of the non-Muslim communities. In his opinion the offer violated the pledged given by the

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21. *Shriomani Akali Dal Di Panth Sewa di Report*, p. 26.

22. J.S. Grewal, *The Sikhs of the Punjab*, Cambridge, 1990, pp. 171-172.

23. K.C. Gulati, *Op. cit.*, pp. 87-88.

24. Indu Banga, 'Crisis of Sikh Politics (1940-47)', in Josepho Connell and others (eds.), *Sikh History and Religion in the 20th Century*, Centre for South Asia Studies Toronto, 1988, pp. 233-34.

25. K.C. Gulati, *Op. cit.*, p. 89.

Congress to the Sikhs and other minorities in 1929 at the Lahore session of the Congress.<sup>26</sup>

In the surcharged atmosphere the British Officers in Punjab tried to bring about approachment between the Akalis and the Unionists in order to get maximum support for the War effort from Punjab. The chances of doing so seemed remote, as the relations between the two remained strained since the Shahidganj episode. The death of Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia in 1940 and the defeat of Sardar Kirpal Singh, son of Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia by Gurbaksh Singh Randhawa, a candidate of Master Tara Singh in the Batala by election led to the disappearance of political importance and influence of the Khalsa National Party in Punjab. Therefore the Unionist Party and Sir Sikander had to look for a new partner. So, he concentrated his efforts on wooing the Akalis as they and their leader Master Tara Singh who really mattered in the Sikh politics.<sup>27</sup>

In the changed circumstances, Sardar Baldev Singh a close confidant of Master Tara Singh in March 1942 established a new Sikh party called the Sikh Punjab United Party. The new party had only seven members. Baldev Singh entered into an agreement with Sir Sikander and joined his cabinet on 26 June 1942 as a minister for development. This agreement was known as Sikander-Baldev Singh Pact.<sup>28</sup> The terms of the pact were related to the problems like eating of Jhatka meat, teaching of Gurmukhi, legislation regarding religious matters and services for the Sikhs under the Punjab Government.<sup>29</sup>

Master Tara Singh approved the proposals of the agreement but said that everything would depend on the spirit in which these were worked. While the pact brought the Sikhs and the Unionists close, it made the Punjab Congress leaders uneasy. In fact, the Sikh suspicion of the Congress support and desire of both the Sikhs and the Unionists to control the politics of Punjab had led to the agreement. Master Tara Singh made it categorically, clear that the pact was between two individuals and not between two parties and the Akalis would continue to fight as before against the Unionists or any other party on political issues like complete independence for India and opposition to the demand for

26. Master Tara Singh, 'Mr. Rajgopalachari di Peshkash. Sikhon na Gaddari de Barabar Hai' (The offer of Mr. Rajgopalachari is akin to treachery with the Sikhs). *Shiromani Akali Dal di Panth Sewa di Saalana Report* (1940-41). Amritsar, 1941, p. 21.

27. Personal interview with S. Gurbaksh Singh Advocate, 8 December, 1998.

28. K.C. Gulati, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

29. Mitras: *Annual Register*, 1942, Vol. I, p. 344.

Pakistan.<sup>30</sup>

Infact by this pact Masterji wanted to warn the Congress about the political importance of the Sikhs and by helping the British during the War wanted a secure place for the Sikhs in any future setup. By this pact the Sikhs made Sir Sikander to agree to their demands. But in turn accepted no binding conditions. It was evidently defeat of Sir Sikander at the hands of Masterji.<sup>31</sup>

But the situation of confusion and uncertainty again prevailed upon the relations between the Sikhs and Unionists with the untimely and sudden death of Sir Sikander within six months of the conclusion of the Pact. His successor Khizar Hyatt was not competent enough and shrewd like his predecessor. He often yielded to the political pressures that went against the interests of the Sikhs. He could not maintain a balance between the Sikander- Baldev Pact and the Sikander-Jinnah-Pact. All this naturally tended to mar the Akali Unionist relations on the other hand, as the War progressed and it appeared more certain that the British would transfer power jointly to the Congress and the Muslim League, the Punjabi Muslim landlord who were the backbone of the Unionist party started going away from the party and were inclined towards the Muslim League. The Unionist hold over the Muslims started weakening and in such circumstances the outstanding problems of the Sikhs remained unsolved.

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30. K.C. Gulati, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

31. P.S. Kapur, 'Master Tara Singh : A Biographical Sketch', *The Punjab Journal of Politics*, Amritsar, 1986, p. 114.

## ARTICLE 370 AND SPECIAL STATUS OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR : NEED FOR A SECOND LOOK

Sharda Sharma \*

The year 1947 was a momentous event in the history of India when India got freedom from the British rule. While transferring power, the British created two independent dominions viz., India and Pakistan. Besides there were about 562 princely States under the British paramountcy. With the passing of Indian Independence Act, 1947 British paramountcy over Princely States lapsed. The Indian Independence Act gave the rulers of Princely States the option to accede to either of the two dominions. Jammu and Kashmir state was one of these Princely States which decided the issue of Accession in favour of India by signing the instrument of Accession on 26 Oct., 1947.<sup>1</sup> The instrument of Accession was the same as signed by the rulers of the other Princely States. It was unconditional, voluntary and absolute.<sup>2</sup> It bound the state of Jammu and Kashmir and India together legally and constitutionally. The Accession was made in three subjects – defence, foreign affairs and communications. The Government of India was entitled to exercise jurisdiction over these matters only. The Union Parliament had no jurisdiction to legislate on any other matter.<sup>3</sup> So far the internal administration of the state was concerned sovereignty remained with the ruler. This was provided in clause 8 of the Instrument of Accession which reads:

“Nothing in this Instrument affects the continuance of my sovereignty in and over this state, or save as provided by or under this instrument, the existence of any powers, authority and rights now enjoyed by me as a Ruler of this State or the validity of any law at present in force in this state.”

It is the evident from this clause that the Instrument of accession did not

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1. For the text of the Instrument of Accession, See P. L. Lakhanpal, *Essential Documents and Notes on Kashmir Dispute*, pp. 57-60 (1965).
2. See A.S. Anand, *The Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir : Its Development and Comments*, p.75 (1994).
3. D.K. Wadhwa, *Constitutional Autonomy : A Case Study of Jammu and Kashmir*, p.10 (2001).

in any way affect the sovereignty of the Ruler in and over the acceding state. The Supreme Court of India in Prem Nath Koul Vs the State of Jammu and Kashmir observed:

“We must therefore reject the argument that the execution of the Instrument of Accession, affected in any manner the legislative, executive and judicial power in regard to the Government of the State, which then vested in the Ruler of the State.”

The Internal administration of the State even after its accession was being governed by the Jammu and Kashmir Constitution Act, 1939. It was under this Act that Maharaja Hari Singh had appointed Sheikh Abdullah as an Emergency Administrator in 1947.<sup>4</sup> Emergency Administration was replaced by an interim government by a proclamation made by Maharaja Hari Singh on 5th March, 1948. This proclamation marked the first step towards the establishment of a popular ministry and towards the framing of democratic constitution for the State.<sup>5</sup> And the State was still to be governed by the Constitution Act of 1939, pending the framing of a new constitution by the duly elected Constituent Assembly.<sup>6</sup>

In 1949 Indian Constituent Assembly was coming closer to the task assigned to it. A large number of Indian States had been represented in the Indian Constituent Assembly and had taken their share in framing of the constitution. On the advice of his council of ministers Yuvraj Karan Singh nominated four representatives to the Indian Constituent Assembly in June 1949.<sup>7</sup> These representatives made it clear that Kashmir's association with India would be based 'only' on the terms of the Instrument of Accession. It was also made clear that while the accession was complete in fact and in law to the extent of the subjects enumerated in this Instrument. The autonomy of the State with regard to all

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4. All India Reporter, 1959, Supreme Court 749.

5. See the opening address by the Hon'ble Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah to the Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly dated November 5, 1951, pp. 1-22, at p-8 (Issued by the Constituent Assembly Secretariat, J&K).

6. *Supra* note 2 at pp. 96-97. It was in 1954 the Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir ratified the State's accession to India and set the controversy regarding the future affiliations of the state at rest.

7. Members representing the State in the Indian Constituent Assembly were Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah, Mirza Afzal Beg, Maulana Masoodi and Moti Ram Baigra.

other subjects fell outside the ambit of the Instrument of Accession and was to be preserved.<sup>8</sup> Whereas Constitution of India laid down Constitutional provisions not only for the former provinces of British India but also for other Princely States as full fledged Constitutional units of the Union, in the case of Kashmir it had to make special provisions. And this was explained by Sir Gopalaswami Ayyangar, who moved the Bill for that purpose in the Indian Constituent Assembly. He said, "at present the State is a unit of federal State, namely the Dominion of India. This dominion is getting transferred into a Republic, which will be inaugurated on 26th January, 1950. The Jammu and Kashmir state therefore has to become a unit of the new Republic of India."<sup>9</sup>

During the debate Ayyangar observed that the relationship of all the states with the Government of India till India became a Republic, was based on the Instrument of Accession. But whereas in case of other Indian States "Instrument of Accession will be a thing of the past in the new constitution. The States have been integrated with the Federal Republic in such a manner that they do not have to accede or execute a document of Accession for becoming units of the Republic."<sup>10</sup> It would not be so in case of Kashmir, since, "that particular state is not yet ripe for this kind of integration, due to the special conditions prevailing in Kashmir and in the second place, the Government of India have also committed themselves to the position that an opportunity would be given to the people of the State to decide for themselves, the nature of their Constitution."<sup>11</sup>

The State Government also made clear its stance that it was for the Constituent Assembly of the state to frame the constitution of the State and that any provision that may be made in the Constitution of India regarding Kashmir the basis should be the "Instrument of Accession." And till the Constituent Assembly of the State consented to accede in any other subject to the Union, the relationship between India and the state should be limited to the subjects specified in the Instrument of Accession. On this principle, it was decided to have an interim arrangement in the Constitution of India regarding Kashmir and it took the shape of Article 370.<sup>12</sup> The future relations of Kashmir with

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8. *Supra*, note 2 at p. 98.

9. See *Constituent Assembly Debates* (India), Vol. X, No.10, p. 422.

10. *Ibid*.

11. *Ibid*.

12. For the text of Article 370, See *Constitution of India*.

India were to be governed by this article, which is clearly based on the Instrument of Accession and gave special status to Kashmir. The salient features of Article 370 are as under:<sup>13</sup>

1. It exempts the State from the provisions of the Indian Constitution providing for the governance of the State.<sup>14</sup> J& K is allowed to have its own constitution as a component of Indian Federal Polity.
2. Parliament's legislative power over the State is restricted to three subjects namely Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications. The President has the power to extend to the state such other provisions of the Indian Constitution relating to the matters specified in the Instrument of Accession. This only requires consultation with the State Government since the State has already accepted them as part of Instrument of Accession.
3. The other Constitutional provisions or other Union powers can be extended to the State only with the prior concurrence of the State Government.
4. The concurrence given by the State Government has to be ratified by the State's Constituent Assembly. Article 370(2) reads, "If the concurrence of the government of the state be given before the Constituent Assembly for the purpose of framing the constitution of the state is convened, it shall be placed before such Assembly for such decision as it may be taken thereon."
5. Article 370 (3) empowers the President to make an order abrogating or amending it. For this purpose the recommendation of the State's Constituent Assembly shall be necessary before the President issues such a notification. Under Article 368 there is a proviso which says that "no constitutional amendment shall have effect in relation to the State of Jammu and Kashmir unless applied by the order of the President under article 370 which requires the concurrence of the State Government and ratification by the Constituent Assembly."

Since its inception Article 370 has been a subject of grave legal and political controversies having far reaching implications on Centre-State relations. It questions the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India. With accession of the State, matter would have been settled once for ever. Article 370 not only unsettled the relationship of the state with the centre, but also opened up a

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13. See Sudesh Kumar Sharma, "Restoration of Pre -1953 Position : A Retrogressive Step" in *Burning Issues in Jammu and Kashmir Politics*, pp. 243-244 (1999).

14. Article 238 governs the relationship between the Union and other part 'B' states and this article was not to apply to the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Pandora's box of issues and conflicts which have disturbed the Indian psyche. The impression still gains ground that the Jammu and Kashmir State cannot be treated as an integral part of India so long this Article exists on the statute book.<sup>15</sup> There would have been no harm if Kashmir as a border State was accorded a special status from the point of view of security and defence purposes. But article 370 puts a question mark on the finality of Accession. It denies the Indian Parliament the right to legislate for the state on the matters other than defence, external affairs and communications, for which the concurrence of the State Government is necessary. State Assembly has the status and powers of a sovereign legislature.<sup>16</sup>

It also violates some of the fundamental principles of constitutionalism, federal structure implying harmony in the centre-state relations, is the first casualty. It discriminates against other states which are a part and parcel of Indian Union. The idea of a special status is incompatible with the principle of equal treatment to all constituent units within a federal system. Preferential treatment to one state vis-a-vis other states produces psychological barriers amongst people. Besides, doling out of more monetary grants and concessions by the centre to remove poverty and economic backwardness seems unfair to those states which are comparatively more backward, less resourceful and are at a much disadvantageous position. The most damaging effect of article 370 is its granting of special rights and privileges to its own Permanent Residents and treating other Indian citizens as foreigners in the land which rightfully belongs

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15. See M.M. Sankhdhar, "Article 370: A National Deception," in *Burning Issues in Jammu and Kashmir Politics* (1999), p. 234.

16. Id. at 235, the State Assembly passed the Jammu and Kashmir Grant of Permit for Resettlement in (or Permanent Return to) the State Act 1982 (Act No. X of 1982). Under this law the permanent residents of J&K State who opted for Pakistan or were left on the other side of the border in wake of disturbances in 1947 can return and resettle within the territory of the State after seeking a permit of resettlement from the prescribed authority. Article 11 of the Indian Constitution vests the power to enact the law relating to citizenship only in the Indian Parliament. This Act, thus poses a challenge to India's sovereignty and territorial integrity. A petition challenging the constitutionality of this law is pending before the Supreme Court of India and its implementation has also been stayed pending disposal of the petition.

to them.<sup>17</sup> While a Permanent Resident of the State is allowed to avail the fundamental right to reside and settle in any part of the territory of India, a citizen of India cannot claim such benefits in Jammu and Kashmir. A Permanent Resident of the State can contest elections to Parliament from any constituency in India, a non-Kashmiri cannot contest elections for J&K assembly or for Parliament from any constituency in J&K.<sup>18</sup> The doors of Jammu and Kashmir are thus closed to Indian citizens as they cannot settle down in the State and acquire immovable property.<sup>19</sup> The State has its own flag and emblem. All India Radio in Kashmir is named as Radio Kashmir and so on. These are more channels of disintegration than integration. Given the situation can anybody visualize integration of the state with Indian Union?

Those who plead for the retention of article 370 take the plea that it is essential for preserving a separate Kashmiri identity i.e., Kashmiriyut etc. But it is a claim which has serious repercussions on the other states who too have their distinct cultural identities, but do not find any conflict with the national identity.<sup>20</sup> Article 370 has given a wrong notion to the Kashmiris of being privileged citizens. Shri Jagmohan, former Governor of J&K State observed: "Any proposition that puts the people of Kashmir and India in different compartments does violence to the history and true intellectualism."<sup>21</sup> Article 370 is a fountain head of such mischief which places the people of Jammu and Kashmir viz-a-vis India in different compartments and eludes them of deception and alienation. It needs a second look and restructuring if the state has to fall in line with other states of Indian Union.

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17. Article 35-A empowers the state legislature to enact laws conferring on permanent residents special rights and privileges in matters relating to employment under the state government, acquisition of immovable property in the state, settlement in the state and right to scholarships and such other forms of aid as the state government may provide. Such a legislation shall be valid notwithstanding the fact that it is violative of Article 14 of the constitution. The reason being Article 35-A falls in the fundamental rights chapter and is a fundamental right in itself.
  18. Section 69 of Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir reads inter-alia that a person shall be disqualified for being chosen and for being a member of Legislative Assembly or Legislative Council if he is not a permanent resident of the state (emphasis added).
  19. See section 14 of the constitution of Jammu and Kashmir.
  20. *Supra*, note 14 at p. 238.
  21. Jagmohan, "Kashmir Intellectuals Club: Of Ignorant Eager Beavers," *Indian Express*, Chandigarh, Friday, Feb. 21, 1997, p-6; See also Jagmohan, *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir*, pp. 230-254 (1991).

#### ਦਸੰਬਰ 4, 2002 ਨੂੰ ਹੋਈ 'ਪੰਜਾਬ ਹਿਸਟਰੀ ਸੋਸਾਇਟੀ' ਦੀ ਮੀਟਿੰਗ ਦੀ ਕਾਰਵਾਈ

ਪੰਜਾਬ ਹਿਸਟਰੀ ਸੋਸਾਇਟੀ ਦੀ ਮੀਟਿੰਗ ਮਿਤੀ 4. 12. 2002, ਦਿਨ ਬੁੱਧਵਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਾਮ 5.00 ਵਜੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਸਟੇਟ ਪੁਰਾਤਤਵ ਲੇਖ ਵਿਭਾਗ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ ਵਿਖੇ ਹੋਈ। ਇਸ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨਗੀ ਰਿਟਾਇਰਡ ਪ੍ਰੋ. ਕੁਲਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਰੇਵਾਲ ਨੇ ਕੀਤੀ। ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਡਾ. ਸੁਖਦਿਆਲ ਸਿੰਘ (ਮੁੱਖੀ, ਪੰਜਾਬ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਵਿਭਾਗ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ) ਨੇ 'ਸਪਤ-ਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੀ ਕਾਲਪਨਿਕਤਾ' ਤੇ ਆਪਣਾ ਖੋਜ ਪਰਚਾ ਪੜ੍ਹਿਆ। ਉਪਰੰਤ ਪਰਚੇ ਬਾਰੇ ਭਰਪੂਰ ਬਹਿਸ ਹੋਈ। ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਮੈਂਬਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਬਹਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਲਿਆ। ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਸਨ :

1. ਸ. ਅਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ (ਰਿਟਾਇਰਡ)  
ਪੰਜਾਬ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਵਿਭਾਗ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
2. ਡਾ. ਬਲਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ (ਰਿਟਾਇਰਡ)  
ਪੰਜਾਬ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਵਿਭਾਗ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
3. ਪ੍ਰੋ. ਐਸ. ਐਸ. ਟਿਵਾਣਾ,  
ਪਬਲਿਕ ਐਡਮਨਿਸਟ੍ਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਵਿਭਾਗ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
4. ਡਾ. ਜਸਪਾਲ ਕੌਰ,  
ਹਿਸਟਰੀ ਵਿਭਾਗ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
5. ਡਾ. ਜਗਰੂਪ ਕੌਰ,  
ਪੁਲਿਟੀਕਲ ਸਾਇੰਸ ਵਿਭਾਗ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
6. ਡਾ. ਆਰ. ਕੇ. ਘਈ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਵਿਭਾਗ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
7. ਡਾ. ਮਨਦੀਪ ਕੌਰ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਵਿਭਾਗ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
8. ਡਾ. ਦਲਜੀਤ ਕੌਰ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਵਿਭਾਗ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।

9. ਸ. ਦਲਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਵਿਭਾਗ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
10. ਸ. ਵਰਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਭਾਟੀਆ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਵਿਭਾਗ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
11. ਸ. ਸੁਖਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ (ਰਿਟਾਇਰਡ)  
ਪੰਜਾਬ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਵਿਭਾਗ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
12. ਸ. ਸੰਸਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ, (ਪੁਲਿਟੀਕਲ ਸਾਇੰਸ)  
ਪੱਤਰ ਵਿਹਾਰ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਵਿਭਾਗ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
13. ਡਾ. ਲਖਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਿੱਧੂ, (ਪੁਲਿਟੀਕਲ ਸਾਇੰਸ)  
ਪੱਤਰ ਵਿਹਾਰ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਵਿਭਾਗ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
14. ਡਾ. ਨਾਜਰ ਸਿੰਘ, (ਹਿਸਟਰੀ)  
ਪੱਤਰ ਵਿਹਾਰ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਵਿਭਾਗ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
15. ਡਾ. ਯਾਦਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ  
ਜੋਗਰਫੀ ਵਿਭਾਗ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
16. ਡਾ. ਬੀ. ਐਸ. ਗਰੇਵਾਲ  
ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਮਹਿੰਦਰਾ ਕਾਲਜ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
17. ਡਾ. ਨਰਜੀਤ ਕੌਰ,  
ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਮਹਿੰਦਰਾ ਕਾਲਜ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
18. ਡਾ. ਐਚ. ਐਸ. ਗਿੱਲ,  
ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਮਹਿੰਦਰਾ ਕਾਲਜ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
19. ਡਾ. ਵਿਕਰਮ ਸਿੰਘ,  
ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਕਾਲਜ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
20. ਡਾ. ਮੁਹੰਮਦ ਇਦਰੀਸ, ਰਿਸਰਚ ਸਕਾਲਰ,  
ਹਿਸਟਰੀ ਵਿਭਾਗ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
21. ਮੁਹੰਮਦ ਸਲੀਮ, ਰਿਸਰਚ ਸਕਾਲਰ,  
ਹਿਸਟਰੀ ਵਿਭਾਗ,  
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।
22. ਡਾ. ਸਮਸ਼ਾਦ ਅਲੀ (ਸਹਾਇਕ ਆਰਕਾਇਵਿਸਟ)

## ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੀ ਕਾਲਪਨਿਕਤਾ

ਸੁਖਦਿਆਲ ਸਿੰਘ \*

ਕਾਲਪਨਿਕਤਾ ਤੋਂ ਭਾਵ ਹੈ ਕਲਪਨਾ। ਕਲਪਨਾ ਅਸਲੀਅਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਸਗੋਂ ਅੰਦਾਜ਼ੇ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਸੋਚੀਆਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਗੱਲਾਂ ਦੀ ਗਾਥਾ ਹੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦਾ ਵਿਸ਼ਾ ਐਸਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਸਦਾ ਵਰਨਣ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਲਿਖਤ ਵਿਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਦਾ। ਸਿਰਫ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਇਕ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਖੇਤਰ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਸੀ ਲੇਕਿਨ ਇਹ ਖੇਤਰ ਕਿਹੜਾ ਸੀ? ਕਿਥੇ ਸੀ? ਕਦੋਂ ਸੀ? ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਕੁਝ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਕੁਝ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕਾਰ ਇਸ ਬਿੱਤੇ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੰਧ ਦਰਿਆ ਦੇ ਖੇਤਰ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਖੇਤਰ ਨਾਲ ਪਛਾਣ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ, ਲੇਕਿਨ ਇਹ ਪਛਾਣ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੇ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਮੇਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਖਾਂਦੀ। ਅਸਲ ਦੇ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਅਰਥ ਵੀ ਗਲਤ ਸਮਝੇ ਗਏ ਹਨ। ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੇ ਅਰਥ ਹਨ 'ਸੱਤ ਦਰਿਆ', ਅਰਥਾਤ ਉਹ ਖੇਤਰ ਜਿਥੇ ਸੱਤ ਦਰਿਆ ਵਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਸਿੰਧ ਖੇਤਰ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਛੇ ਵੱਡੇ ਦਰਿਆ ਵਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਸਾਡੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕਾਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਛੇ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸੱਤਵਾਂ ਜਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਘੱਗਰ ਨੂੰ ਜੋੜ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਹੈ, ਜਾਂ ਸਰਸਵਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਅਤੇ ਜਾਂ ਜਮੁਨਾ ਨੂੰ। ਲੇਕਿਨ ਇਹ ਤਿੰਨੇ ਦਰਿਆ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਸੂਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੰਧ ਦੇ ਤੱਟੀ ਖੇਤਰ ਨਾਲ ਇਕਰੂਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਖਦੇ। ਸਿੰਧ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਇਕ ਵੱਖਰਾ ਤੱਟੀ ਖੇਤਰ ਰਖਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸਦੀ ਇਕ ਇਕਾਈ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਨਾ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਪੰਜਾਂ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਇਸਦੀ ਪੱਛਮੀ ਸਹਾਇਕ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜ ਕੇ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ। ਜਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਿੰਧ ਦੇ ਪੂਰਬ ਵਲ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਪੰਜ ਦਰਿਆ ਇਸ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਹਾਇਕ ਸਾਖਾਵਾਂ ਹਨ ਉਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਇਸਦੇ ਪੱਛਮ ਵਲ ਵੀ ਅਫਗਾਨਿਸਤਾਨ ਦੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਉਪਰ ਪੰਜ ਵੱਡੇ ਦਰਿਆ ਇਸਦੇ ਸਹਾਇਕ ਹਨ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਹਨ : 1. ਕੁਭਾ, 2. ਕਰਮੂ, 3. ਗੋਮਤੀ, 4. ਰਸਾ ਅਤੇ 5. ਸਵਾਤ (ਸਵਾਸਤੂ)। ਸਹਾਇਕ ਦਾ ਮਤਲਬ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਦਰਿਆ ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਆ ਕੇ ਮਿਲੇ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਿੰਧ ਦਸ ਸਹਾਇਕ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਵਾਲਾ ਇਕ ਵਿਸ਼ਾਲ ਦਰਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸੱਤ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਮਕਰਣ ਵਿਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਆ ਸਕਦਾ। ਇਸ ਰੋਸ਼ਨੀ ਵਿਚ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੀ ਜਿਹੜੀ ਪਛਾਣ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਨਾਲ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਇਕ ਕਲਪਨਾ ਮਾਤਰ ਹੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸਦੀ ਅਸਲੀਅਤ ਕਿਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਹੈ। ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ ਸਾਡੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕਾਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਵਿਚਲੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ 'ਸਿੰਧੂ' ਨੂੰ ਸਿੰਧ ਦਰਿਆ ਸਮਝ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਹੈ। ਸਿੰਧ ਦਰਿਆ ਸਮਝਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਹ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਅਰਥ ਸੱਤ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਵਾਲਾ ਸਿੰਧ ਸਮਝ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੇ ਅਰਥ ਸਿਰਫ ਪਾਣੀ ਜਾਂ ਦਰਿਆ ਦੇ ਹਨ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਸਿੰਧ ਦਾ ਅਰਥ ਸਿਰਫ ਪਾਣੀ ਤੋਂ ਹੈ ਸਿੰਧ ਦਰਿਆ ਤੋਂ ਨਹੀਂ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੇ ਅਰਥ ਗਲਤ ਸਮਝਣ ਨਾਲ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਸਮੁੱਚਾ ਭਾਵ ਹੀ ਬਦਲ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸੱਤ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਵਾਲੀ ਧਰਤੀ, ਪੰਜਾਬ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੰਧ ਖੇਤਰ ਤੋਂ ਪਰੇ ਕਿਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਹੋਰ ਧਰਤੀ ਹੈ। ਲੇਕਿਨ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਤਲਾਸ਼ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤੀ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚਾਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਰੋਸ਼ਨੀ ਵਿਚ, ਹੁਣ ਤਕ ਜੋ ਚਰਚਾ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੀ ਚਲਦੀ ਆ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਕਾਲਪਨਿਕ ਰੂਪ ਅਖਤਿਆਰ ਕਰ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਖੋਜ ਕਲਪਨਾ ਨੂੰ ਖਤਮ ਕਰਕੇ ਅਸਲੀਅਤ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਲਿਆਉਣ ਦੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਲੇਖ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਹੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ।

\* ਮੁੱਖੀ, ਪੰਜਾਬ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਵਿਭਾਗ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ।

ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦਾ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਪਾਰਸੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਧਰਮ ਗਰੰਥ ਜੋਂਦ ਅਵੇਸਤਾ ਵਿਚ ਹਪਤ ਹੋਂਦੂ ਜਾਂ ਹਪਤ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਆਇਆ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਰਿਗ ਵੇਦ ਵਿਚ ਆਇਆ ਹੈ। ਜੋਂਦ ਅਵੇਸਤਾ, ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਦਾ ਗਰੰਥ ਹੈ। ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਿਸ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਉਪ-ਮਹਾਂਦੀਪ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰਲੇ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਬੋਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਖੇ ਗਰੰਥ ਵਿਚ ਆਇਆ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਇਹ ਮੰਨਣ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਕੋਈ ਝਿਜਕ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਣੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਦੇਸ਼ ਵੀ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਉਪ-ਮਹਾਂਦੀਪ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਕਿਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਥਾਂ ਤੇ ਸੀ। ਇਹ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਜਾ ਚੁੱਕਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਰਿਗ ਵੇਦ ਅਤੇ ਜੋਂਦ ਅਵੇਸਤਾ ਵਿਚ ਕਾਫੀ ਕੁਝ ਸਾਂਝਾ ਹੈ। ਮੋਟੇ ਜਿਹੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜੋਂਦ ਅਵੇਸਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਰਿਗ ਵੇਦ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਾਂਝੇ ਪਿਛੋਕੜ ਦੀ ਤਰਜਮਾਨੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਜੋਂਦ ਅਵੇਸਤਾ ਵਿਚਲੀ 'ਹ' ਅੱਖਰ ਦੀ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਵਿਚ 'ਸ' ਅੱਖਰ ਨਾਲ ਬਣਾਈ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਜੋਂਦ ਅਵੇਸਤਾ ਦਾ ਹਪਤ ਹੋਂਦੂ, ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਦਾ ਸਪਤ ਸਿੰਧੂ ਬਣ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਜੋਂਦ ਅਵੇਸਤਾ ਦੀ ਹਰਹਵੇਤੀ, ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਦੀ ਸਰਸਵਤੀ ਬਣ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਜਿਵੇਂ ਭਾਰਤ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ 'ਇੰਡੀਆ' ਯੂਨਾਨੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਇੰਡਸ ਰਿਵਰ ਤੋਂ ਵਿਕਸਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਸੀ, ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਿੰਧ ਦਰਿਆ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ 'ਸ' ਨੂੰ 'ਹ' ਅੱਖਰ ਵਿਚ ਬਦਲ ਕੇ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਨਾਂ ਪਰਚੱਲਤ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। 'ਹਿੰਦੂ' ਜੋਂਦ ਅਵੇਸਤਾ ਤੋਂ ਲਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਹੈ। ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਦੇ ਅੱਖਰੀ ਅਰਥ ਹਨ ਦਰਿਆ ਸਿੰਧ ਦੇ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਿੰਧੂ ਲੋਕ। ਇਹ ਸਿੰਧੂ ਲੋਕ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਕਹੇ ਜਾਣ ਲੱਗ ਪਏ। ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਵਿਚਾਰਨ ਯੋਗ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਦੇ ਸਿੰਧੂ ਲੋਕ ਜੋਂਦ ਅਵੇਸਤਾ ਦੇ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਕਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਬਣ ਗਏ। ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਿੰਧ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਵਸੇ ਮੁੱਢਲੇ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਜਜ਼ਬਾਤ ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਜੋਂਦ ਅਵੇਸਤਾ ਨਾਲ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਜੁੜੇ ਹੋਣ ਜਾਂ ਉਹ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਹਪਤ ਹੋਂਦੂ ਨਾਲ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਲਗਾਓ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਹੋਣ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦੀ ਉਤਪਤੀ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਉਪ-ਮਹਾਂਦੀਪ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਦੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਖਿੱਤੇ ਦੀ ਬੋਲੀ (ਗਰੰਥ) ਵਿਚੋਂ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ, ਬਿਲਕੁਲ ਉਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਪਤ ਸਿੰਧੂ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦੀ ਉਤਪਤੀ ਵੀ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਉਪ-ਮਹਾਂਦੀਪ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਦੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਖਿੱਤੇ ਦੀ ਬੋਲੀ (ਗਰੰਥ) ਵਿਚੋਂ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ। ਇਹੀ ਇਕੋ ਗੱਲ ਇਸ ਤੱਥ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਬਤ ਕਰ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਜੇਕਰ ਕੋਈ ਖੇਤਰ (ਦੇਸ਼) ਸੀ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਉਪ-ਮਹਾਂਦੀਪ ਤੋਂ ਕਿਤੇ ਬਾਹਰ ਸੀ। ਜ਼ਰਤੁਸਤ ਧਰਮ, ਜਿਸਦਾ ਮੂਲ ਧਰਮ ਗਰੰਥ ਜੋਂਦ ਅਵੇਸਤਾ ਹੈ, ਦੀ ਉਤਪਤੀ ਆਜ਼ਰਬਾਈਜਾਨ ਦੇ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਈ ਸੀ। ਅਤੇ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਕਸੇਤਰੇਸ਼ ਚੰਦਰ ਚੱਟੋਪਾਧਿਆਏ ਨੇ, ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਦੇ ਆਧਾਰ ਤੇ ਤੁਰਕਮੇਨਸਤਾਨ ਦੇ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਹੈ। ਆਜ਼ਰਬਾਈਜਾਨ ਅਤੇ ਤੁਰਕਮੇਨਸਤਾਨ, ਇਹ ਦੋਵੇਂ ਖੇਤਰ ਹੀ ਦੱਖਣੀ ਰੂਸ ਦੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਉਪਰ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਥਾਂ ਵੱਖ ਵੱਖ ਥਾਂਵਾਂ ਤੇ ਪਸਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਜਨਮ ਭੂਮੀ ਸੀ। ਕਿੰਗਡਿਸ਼ਰ ਹਿਸਟਰੀ ਇਨਸਾਈਕਲੋਪੀਡੀਆ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਤਕਰੀਬਨ 3500 ਸਾਲ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਪਸ਼ੂ ਚਾਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਇਕ ਇਕੱਠ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਕੁਸ਼ ਪਹਾੜਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪਾਰ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਸ ਜਮੀਨ ਤੇ ਪਹੁੰਚਿਆ ਸੀ ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਅੱਜ ਕੱਲ੍ਹ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਰਤ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਉਹ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕ ਸਨ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਦੱਖਣੀ ਰੂਸ ਵਿਚਲੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਮੁੱਢਲੀ ਮਾਤਭੂਮੀ ਤੋਂ ਭੱਜ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ। ਕਿਸੇ ਕੁਦਰਤੀ ਆਫ਼ਤ, ਸੰਭਵ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਸੌਕੇ ਜਾਂ ਬਿਮਾਰੀ ਨੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਥੋਂ ਭੱਜਣ ਲਈ ਮਜ਼ਬੂਰ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੀ। ਇਥੋਂ ਉਹ ਐਨਟੋਲੀਆ (ਤੁਰਕੀ), ਪਰਸੀਆ (ਈਰਾਨ) ਅਤੇ ਅੰਤਿਮ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਭਾਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਚਲੇ ਗਏ ਸਨ।

["About 3500 years ago a band of pastoralists crossed the mountains of the Hindu Kush into the lands which are now Pakistan and India. They were the Aryans, fleeing from their original homelands in Southern Russia. A natural disaster, possibly drought or disease

1. ਦੇਖੋ, ਫਾਰਸੀ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਦਾ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ, ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, 1971, ਪੰਨਾ 5.

made them move. They went to Antolia, Persia and finally to India.]”<sup>2</sup>

ਜੇਦ ਅਵੇਸਤਾ, ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਦੀ ਲਿਖਤ ਹੈ। ਭਾਵੇਂ ਇਹ ਠੀਕ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਉਪ-ਮਹਾਂਦੀਪ ਵਿਚ ਰਿਗ ਵੇਦ - II ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਲਿਖਤ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਉਪ-ਮਹਾਂਦੀਪ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਇਕ ਹੋਰ ਗਰੰਥ ਹੋਂਦ ਵਿਚ ਆ ਚੁਕਿਆ ਸੀ, ਇਹ ਸੀ ਜੇਦ ਅਵੇਸਤਾ। ਜੇਦ ਅਵੇਸਤਾ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਰਿਗ ਵੇਦ ਵਾਂਗ ਵੱਖ ਵੱਖ ਸਮਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਈ ਸੀ ਪਰ ਜੇਦ ਅਵੇਸਤਾ, ਜੋ ਮੌਲਿਕ ਤੇ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਰਿਗ ਵੇਦ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਜਾ ਚੁਕਿਆ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਦੀ ਪੁਸ਼ਟੀ ਇਸ ਤੱਥ ਤੋਂ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਭਾਰਤ ਭੂਮੀ ਵਿਚ (ਸਿੰਧ ਖੇਤਰ) ਪਰਵੇਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕ ਪਰਸ਼ੀਆ (ਇਰਾਨ) ਵਿਚ ਵੱਸ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਸਨ। ਭਾਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਪਰਵੇਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕ ਪਰਸ਼ੀਆ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਹੀ ਆਏ ਸਨ। ਇਹ ਵੀ ਇਕ ਕਾਰਨ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜੇਦ ਅਵੇਸਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਰਿਗ ਵੇਦ ਵਿਚ ਕਾਫੀ ਕੁਝ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਜੁਲਦਾ ਹੈ।<sup>3</sup> ਕਿੰਗਫਿਸ਼ਰ ਹਿਸਟਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਚਾਰ ਹਜ਼ਾਰ ਸਾਲ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ, ਐਟਲਾਂਟਿਕ ਸਾਗਰ ਦੇ ਪੂਰਬ ਵਲ ਇਕ ਮਹਾਨ ਤਬਦੀਲੀ ਹੋਈ ਸੀ। ਇੰਡੋ-ਯੂਰਪੀਅਨ ਜਾਂ ਆਰੀਆ ਕਹੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਇਕ ਦੁਰਮ ਦੱਖਣੀ ਰੂਸ ਵਿਚਲੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਜਨਮਭੂਮੀ ਤੋਂ ਰਵਾਨਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ। ਕੁਝ ਇੰਡੋ-ਯੂਰਪੀਅਨ ਦੱਖਣ ਵਲ ਇਰਾਨ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਜਾਣੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਦੇਸ਼ ਵਿਚ ਪਹੁੰਚੇ ਸਨ। (A great change took place to the east of the Atlantic Ocean around 4000 years ago. A group of people known as Indo-European or Aryans moved from their homeland in southern Russia. Some Indo-Europeans travelled south into what is now Iran (the name is adapted from the word 'Aryan')

ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਕਥਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਰੋਸ਼ਨੀ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਮੰਨੀ ਜਾ ਚੁੱਕੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਭਾਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਪਰਵੇਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਇਥੇ ਆਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕ ਇਰਾਨ ਦੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਤੇ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ। ਉਥੇ ਰਹਿੰਦਿਆਂ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸ, ਰਸਮਾਂ, ਰੀਤਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਪਰੰਪਰਾਵਾਂ ਜੇਦ ਅਵੇਸਤਾ ਗਰੰਥ ਵਿਚ ਸੰਕਲਿਤ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ ਸਨ। ਇਹੀ ਪਰੰਪਰਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸ, ਭਾਰਤ ਭੂਮੀ ਉਪਰ ਰਹਿਣ ਸਮੇਂ ਜਦੋਂ ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ, ਉਸ ਵਿਚ ਦਰਜ ਹੋ ਗਈਆਂ। ਇਉਂ ਜੇਦ ਅਵੇਸਤਾ ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਦਾ ਗਰੰਥ ਹੈ।

## II

ਹੁਣ ਲੇਖ ਦੇ ਦੂਜੇ ਹਿੱਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਬਿਆਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਹਿੱਸੇ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਦੱਸਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜੇਕਰ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਉਪ-ਮਹਾਂਦੀਪ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਖਿੱਤੇ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਸੀ ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਕਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੋਣ ਲਗ ਪਿਆ ਸੀ? ਵੈਸੇ ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਨੋਟ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਇਸ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ 1930 ਦੀਆਂ ਜਾਂ ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਦੀਆਂ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਆਉਣਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਇਸ਼ਾਰੇ ਮਾਤਰ ਵੀ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਅਜੋਕੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਭਾਈ ਕਾਨ੍ਹ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਭਾ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਲਿਖਤ ਮਹਾਨ ਕੋਸ਼ ਵਿਚ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ। “ਘੱਗਰ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੰਧ ਨਦੀ ਦੇ ਮੱਧ ਦਾ ਦੇਸ਼, ਜਿਸ ਦੀ ਪੁਰਾਣੇ ਗ੍ਰੰਥਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਸੰਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਪੰਜ ਦਰਿਆ, ਘੱਗਰ ਅਤੇ

2. *Kingfisher History Encyclopedia* (40,000 B.C. to present Day). Kingfisher, London, 1995. p. 64.

3. ਫਾਰਸੀ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਦਾ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ, ਪੰਨਾ 6.

ਸਿੰਧ।”<sup>4</sup> ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਵੀ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਜਾ ਚੁੱਕਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਿੰਧ ਦੇ ਦਸ ਸਹਾਇਕ ਦਰਿਆ ਹਨ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਸਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਕ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਸਿੰਧ ਦਰਿਆ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਸੂਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਅਲੱਗ ਕਰਕੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੱਢਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ। ਇਹ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਿੰਧ ਦੇ ਪੰਜ ਉਰਲੇ (ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ) ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਤੇ ਪੰਜ ਪਰਲੇ (ਪੱਛਮ ਵੱਲ ਅਫਗਾਨਿਸਤਾਨ ਵਿਚਲੇ) ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਵੱਖਰੀਆਂ ਇਕਾਈਆਂ ਬਣਾ ਲਈਆਂ ਜਾਣ। ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਪੰਜ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਇਕ ਵੱਖਰੀ ਇਕਾਈ (ਪੰਜਾਬ ਖੇਤਰ) ਹੈ। ਸਿੰਧ ਦਰਿਆ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਮੁੱਚੇ ਤੱਟੀ ਖੇਤਰ ਨੂੰ ਦਰਸਾਏਗਾ। ਜਦੋਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਸਿੰਧ ਖੇਤਰ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਉਹ ਸਾਰਾ ਖੇਤਰ ਆਵੇਗਾ ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਇਸ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਸਹਾਇਕ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਪਾਣੀ ਪਰਾਪਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਘੱਗਰ, ਸਿੰਧ ਤੱਟੀ ਖੇਤਰ ਦਾ ਦਰਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ ਘੱਗਰ, ਦਰਿਆ ਹੈ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਇਹ ਇਕ ਬਰਸਾਤੀ ਨਦੀ ਹੈ ਜਿਹੜੀ ਹਿਮਾਚਲ ਪਰਦੇਸ਼ ਅਤੇ ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਦੇ ਕਰਮਵਾਰ ਕਸ਼ੋਲੀ, ਧਰਮਪੁਰ, ਕਾਲਕਾ ਅਤੇ ਪਿੰਜੋਰ ਦੇ ਇਲਾਕਿਆਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਬਰਸਾਤੀ ਪਾਣੀ ਨਾਲ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਜਸਥਾਨ ਦੇ ਹਨੂਮਾਨਗੜ੍ਹ ਦੇ ਟਿੱਬਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਕੇ ਦਮ ਤੋੜ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਵੀ ਗੱਲ ਗਲਤ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਕਿਸੇ ਪਹਿਲੇ ਸਮਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਕਦੇ ਵੱਡਾ ਦਰਿਆ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਜਦੋਂ ਤੋਂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦਾ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਕਾਲ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਸਿਰਫ ਇਕ ਬਰਸਾਤੀ ਨਦੀ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਹੀ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਕਾਨ੍ਹ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਭਾ ਦਾ ਉਕਤ ਕਥਨ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਗਲਤ ਹੈ।

ਹੈਰਾਨੀ ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਦੀ ਉਦੋਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਜਦੋਂ ਗੰਡਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੈਸੇ ਮਹਾਨ ਅਤੇ ਉੱਚ ਕੋਟੀ ਦੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕਾਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਇਸ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਨੂੰ ਇਤਨੀ ਗੈਰ-ਜਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀ ਨਾਲ ਵਰਤਣਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿਤਾ ਕਿ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਕਥਨ ਉਕਾ ਹੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਤਰਕ ਜਾਂ ਦਲੀਲ ਦੇ ਨੇੜੇ ਤੇੜੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਹੁੰਚਦਾ। ਇਸ ਗੈਰ-ਜਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀ ਦੀ ਮਿਸਾਲ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੈ, “ਪੁਰਾਤਨ ਸਮੇਂ ਵਿਚ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਨੂੰ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਜਾਣਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਦੇ ਪੰਜ ਦਰਿਆ, ਸਿੰਧ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਹਰ ਰੱਖ ਕੇ, ਜਿਹਲਮ, ਚਿਨਾਬ, ਰਾਵੀ, ਬਿਆਸ ਅਤੇ ਸਤਲੁਜ ਸਨ। (1947 ਈ. ਦੀ ਵੰਡ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ) ਭਾਰਤੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਫਿਰ ਵੀ ਪੰਜ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਹਨ ਰਾਵੀ, ਬਿਆਸ, ਸਤਲੁਜ, ਸਰਸਵਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਜਮੁਨਾ।”<sup>5</sup> ਇਸ ਕਥਨ ਵਿਚ ਲਾ-ਪਰਵਾਹੀ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੁਕਤਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਲਕਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਘੱਗਰ ਨੂੰ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਸਰਸਵਤੀ ਦਰਿਆ ਲੈ ਲਿਆ ਹੈ। ਘੱਗਰ ਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਅੱਜ ਕੁਝ ਨਾ ਕੁਝ ਹੋਂਦ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਸਰਸਵਤੀ ਦੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਤਾਂ ਉੱਕੀ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਤਾਂ ਬਰਸਾਤੀ ਨਦੀ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਵੀ ਖ਼ਤਮ ਹੋ ਚੁੱਕੀ ਹੈ। ਦੂਜਾ, ਜਮੁਨਾ ਨੂੰ ਖਾਹਮੁਖਾਹ ਹੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਨਰੜ ਦਿਤਾ ਹੈ। ਜਮੁਨਾ, ਗੰਗਾ ਦੇ ਤੱਟੀ ਖੇਤਰ ਦਾ ਸਹਾਇਕ ਦਰਿਆ ਹੈ। ਡਾ. ਗੰਡਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਇਹ ਗੈਰ-ਜਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀ ਵਾਲਾ ਕਥਨ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਦਾ ਮੂੰਹ-ਮੱਥਾ ਬਿਗਾੜਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੈ। ਇਕ ਹੋਰ ਗੈਰ-ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕਾਰ, ਮਹਿੰਦਰ ਪਾਲ ਕੋਹਲੀ ਵੀ ਇਹ ਲਿਖ ਕੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਤੱਥਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਤੋੜਨ-ਮਰੋੜਨ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ, “ਪਰਾਚੀਨ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀਆਂ ਭੂਗੋਲਿਕ ਹੱਦਾਂ-ਰਿਗਵੇਦਿਕ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੇ ਤਿੰਨ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਪਛਾਣੀਆਂ ਜਾਂਦੀਆਂ ਸਨ।”<sup>6</sup>

ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ ਸਪਤ ਸਿੰਧੂ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਇਸ ਭੁਲੇਖੇ ਨਾਲ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਆ ਘੁਸਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੰਧ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸਾਡੇ ਲੇਖਕ ਇਸ ਸਿੰਧ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੰਧ ਦਰਿਆ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਲੈ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਵੀ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਜਾ ਚੁੱਕਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਥੇ ਸਿੰਧ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ ਸਿਰਫ

4. ਗੁਰ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਰਤਨਾਕਰ ਮਹਾਨ ਕੋਸ਼, ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਭਾਗ, ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, 1990. ਪੰਨਾ 154.

5. Dr. Ganda Singh's. Article 'Introducing the Punjab' in *The Panjab Past and Present*, Volume I, Punjabi University, Patiala. 1967, p. 28.

6. M.P. Kohli's Article 'The Punjab An Overview' in *Sovineer-83rd Indian Science Congress*, 3-8 January. 1996, Punjabi University, Patiala. 1996, pp. 27-28.

ਪਾਣੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਾਗਰ ਤੋਂ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਾਡੇ ਲੇਖਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦੇ ਗਲਤ ਅਰਥ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਗਲਤ ਮੋੜ ਦੇ ਦਿਤਾ ਹੈ। ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਨੂੰ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਨਾਲ ਪਛਾਣਿਆ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਗਲਤ ਤਾਂ ਹਨ ਹੀ ਬਲਕਿ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਬਿਗਾੜਨ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ।

### III

ਲੇਖ ਦੇ ਤੀਜੇ ਹਿੱਸੇ ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਬਾਰੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ ਕਿ ਆਖਰ ਇਸ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਨੂੰ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਵਿਚ ਕਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਬਿਆਨਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਨਿਰਸੰਦੇਹ ਇਹ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਸਹੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਲਈ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਉਸ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਣਨਾ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ ਜੋ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਵਿਚ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਭਾਰਤੀ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਵਿਚ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੀ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਵਿਚ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਬਾਰਾਂ ਵਾਰ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ।<sup>7</sup> ਹਰ ਥਾਂ ਤੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਰੂਪ ਇਕੋ ਜਿਹਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਇਉਂ ਵੱਖ ਵੱਖ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ : ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ, ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧਵ, ਸਪਤ ਸਿੰਧੁਰ, ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੋ ਜਾਂ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧਵਾ ਆਦਿ, ਆਦਿ। ਵੈਸੇ ਅਰਥ ਸਭ ਦੇ ਇਕੋ ਹੀ ਹਨ। ਪੰਜ ਥਾਵਾਂ ਉਪਰ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦਰਸਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਇੰਦਰ ਨੇ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਰਾਖਸ਼ਸ਼ ਵਰਿੱਤਰ ਨਾਲ ਲੜਾਈ ਕਰਕੇ ਛੁਡਵਾਇਆ ਸੀ। ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮੁਕਤ ਕਰਵਾਉਣ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਨਾਲ ਇੰਦਰ ਨੇ ਰੋਸ਼ਨੀ (ਸੂਰਜ) ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਉਸ ਰਾਖਸ਼ਸ਼ ਦੀ ਕੈਦ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਛੁਡਾਇਆ ਸੀ। ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਇੰਦਰ ਅਸਮਾਨ ਦਾ ਪਰਮੁੱਖ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਵਰਖਾ ਵੀ ਲਿਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਸੂਰਜ ਦੀ ਰੋਸ਼ਨੀ ਪਸਰਨ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਅਸਮਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਸਾਫ਼ ਰੱਖਦਾ ਹੈ। ਵਰਿੱਤਰ ਉਹ ਦੈਤ ਜਾਂ ਰਾਖਸ਼ਸ਼ ਹੈ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਕਾਲੀ ਘਟਾ ਬਣ ਕੇ ਛਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਉਂ ਉਹ ਸੂਰਜ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਿਚ ਛੁਪਾ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਧਰਤੀ ਤੇ ਹਨੇਰਾ ਕਰ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਹਨੇਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਮਾੜਾ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕ ਇੰਦਰ ਦੀ ਪੂਜਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਇੰਦਰ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਪੂਜਾ ਤੋਂ ਖੁਸ਼ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਹਰ ਸਮੇਂ ਬੱਦਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਹਨੇਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਦੂਰ ਕਰਦਾ ਰਹੇ। ਇੰਦਰ ਇਸ ਨਾਲ ਯੁੱਧ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਹਰਾ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਉਂ ਕਾਲੇ ਬੱਦਲਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਹਟਾ ਕੇ ਰੋਸ਼ਨੀ (ਸੂਰਜ) ਪਸਰਨ ਲਈ ਅਸਮਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਫ਼ ਕਰ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸੂਰਜ ਨਿਕਲਣ ਨਾਲ ਬਰਫ਼ ਪਿਘਲਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਦਰਿਆ ਵਗ਼ ਤੁਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਭੂਮੀ ਦੇ ਸੱਤ ਦਰਿਆ (ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ) ਵਹਿ ਤੁਰਦੇ ਸਨ।

ਉਕਤ ਕਥਨ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਦੋ ਨੁਕਤੇ ਧਿਆਨ ਦੇਣ ਯੋਗ ਹਨ। ਇਕ ਇਹ ਕਿ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕ ਜਿਸ ਭੂਮੀ ਤੇ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਸਨ ਉਥੇ ਬੱਦਲਾਂ ਦੀ ਕਾਲੀ ਘਟਾ ਨੂੰ ਮਾੜਾ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਬੱਦਲਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਰਾਖਸ਼ਸ਼ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਦਿਤਾ ਸੀ। ਭਾਵ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਦੁਸ਼ਮਣ ਸੀ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਬੱਦਲਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਰ ਭਜਾਉਣ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਇੰਦਰ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਦੇਖਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਸਗੋਂ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਉਲਟ ਬੱਦਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਛਾ ਜਾਣ ਨੂੰ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਦਾ ਪਰਤੀਕ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਲੋਕ ਬੱਦਲਵਾਈ ਹੋਣ ਤੇ ਖੁਸ਼ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਇਸ ਨਾਲ ਗਰਮੀ ਤੋਂ ਰਾਹਤ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਹੈ, ਠੰਡ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਵਰਖਾ ਹੋਣ ਦੀ ਉਮੀਦ ਬੱਝਦੀ ਹੈ। ਸਗੋਂ ਜੇਕਰ ਕਾਫ਼ੀ ਲੰਮਾ ਸਮਾਂ ਬੱਦਲ ਨਾ ਬਣਦੇ ਹੋਣ ਤੇ ਵਰਖਾ ਨਾ ਪਈ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੈਣ ਦਾ ਖਤਰਾ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਲੋਕ ਛੇਤੀ ਬੱਦਲ ਆਉਣ ਲਈ ਜੱਗ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਦੁਆਵਾਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਰਸਮਾਂ-ਰੀਤਾਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਬੱਦਲ ਆਉਣ ਨਾਲ ਆਦਮੀ ਤਾਂ ਕੀ ਇਥੋਂ ਤੱਕ ਕਿ ਪੰਛੀ ਵੀ ਖੁਸ਼ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਮੋਰ ਪੈਲਾਂ ਪਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਛੀ ਚਹਿ-ਚਹਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸ ਤੋਂ ਉਲਟ ਹੈ। ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕ ਬੱਦਲ ਤੋਂ ਡਰਦੇ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਉਹ ਹਰ ਸਮੇਂ ਸੂਰਜ ਚੜ੍ਹਿਆ ਰਹਿਣ ਦੀ ਕਾਮਨਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਸਨ।

7. ਰਿਗਵੇਦ, ਮੰਡਲ ਅੱਠਵਾਂ।

ਦੂਜਾ ਨੁਕਤਾ ਉਕਤ ਨੁਕਤੇ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਹੀ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸੂਰਜ ਨਿਕਲਣ ਨਾਲ ਬਰਫ ਪਿਘਲਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਦਰਿਆ ਚਲਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਇਉਂ ਸਾਬਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਆਰੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਜਨਮ-ਦੇਸ਼ ਵਿਚ ਬਰਫ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਪੈਂਦੀ ਹੋਵੇ ਅਤੇ ਧੁੱਪ ਘੱਟ ਨਿਕਲਦੀ ਹੋਵੇ। ਇਹ ਕਿਸੇ ਠੰਡੇ ਮੁਲਕ ਦੀ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨੀ ਹੈ, ਜਿਥੇ ਲੰਮਾ ਸਮਾਂ ਬਰਫ ਪੈਂਦੀ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਦਰਿਆ ਜੰਮ ਕੇ ਰੁਕ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਸਨ। ਹਨੇਰਾ ਸਾਰਾ ਸਮਾਂ ਛਾਇਆ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਲੋਕ ਬਰਫ ਕਰਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਛਾਂ ਰਹਿਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਅੱਕੇ ਪਏ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਸਨ। ਪਸ਼ੂਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਘਾਹ ਪੱਠਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਅਤੇ ਫਸਲਾਂ ਹੁੰਦੀਆਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਨ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਲੋਕ ਛੇਤੀ ਧੁੱਪ ਨਿਕਲਣ ਦੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਬਰਫ ਨੂੰ ਖਤਮ ਕਰਨ ਦੀਆਂ ਦੁਆਵਾਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ। ਜਦੋਂ ਰੁੱਤ ਫਿਰਨ ਨਾਲ ਧੁੱਪ ਨਿਕਲਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਬਰਫ ਪਿਘਲ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਸੀ। ਵਰਖਾ ਵੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਸੀ, ਦਰਿਆ ਵੀ ਵਹਿ ਤੁਰਦੇ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਇਉਂ ਲੋਕ ਕੰਮ-ਕਾਰ ਕਰਨ ਲੱਗ ਪੈਂਦੇ ਸਨ। ਇਸ ਗਲ ਦੇ ਹਰ ਸਾਲ ਦੇ ਚੱਕਰ ਨੂੰ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਇੰਦਰ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਅਤੇ ਵਰਿੱਤਰ ਰਾਖਸ਼ਸ਼ ਦੀ ਲੜਾਈ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਸਾ ਲਿਆ ਸੀ। ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਉਪਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਢੁੱਕਦੀ। ਪੰਜਾਬ ਸਗੋਂ ਗਰਮ ਦੇਸ਼ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ, ਬਰਫ ਇਥੇ ਪੈਂਦੀ ਨਹੀਂ, ਦਰਿਆ ਸਾਰਾ ਸਾਲ ਵਹਿੰਦੇ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਵਰਖਾ ਘੱਟ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ, ਲੋਕ ਗਰਮੀ ਤੋਂ ਅੱਕੇ ਪਏ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਉਹ ਗਰਮੀ ਤੋਂ ਛੁਟਕਾਰਾ ਪਾਉਣ ਦੀਆਂ ਦੁਆਵਾਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਉਕਤ ਵਾਤਾਵਰਣ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦਾ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਵਿਚ ਵਰਨਣ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦਾ ਮੌਸਮੀ ਵਾਤਾਵਰਣ ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਉਲਟ ਹੈ।

ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਪਿਛੇ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਵਿਚ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਬਾਰਾਂ ਵਾਰ ਆਇਆ ਹੈ। ਉਕਤ ਭਾਵ ਪੰਜ ਥਾਵਾਂ ਉਪਰ ਆਏ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦਾ ਹੈ। ਬਾਕੀ ਵਾਰ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਹੋਰ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਆਇਆ ਹੈ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ ਉਕਤ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਖਰੇਵਾਂ ਰਖਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੇ ਸੱਤ ਦਰਿਆ ਸਿਰਫ ਅਸਮਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਚਲਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਉਪਰ ਵੱਲ ਚਲਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਚੱਲਣ ਨਾਲ ਰੇਸ਼ਨੀ ਵੀ ਫੈਲਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਤਿੰਨ ਤਿੰਨ ਦੀ ਤਿੱਕੜੀ ਵਿਚ ਵਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਫਿਰ ਇਹ ਤਿੱਕੜੀ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਸੱਤ ਸੱਤ ਸ਼ਾਖਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਹਿ ਤੁਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਇਹ ਬਿਰਤਾਂਤ ਕਾਫੀ ਹੱਦ ਤਕ ਕਲਪਿਤ ਜਾਂ ਮਿਥਿਹਾਸਕ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਮੌਨਸੂਨ ਹਵਾਵਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਤਾਂ ਜੋੜਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਜ਼ਮੀਨੀ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਨਹੀਂ।

ਉਪਰਲੀਆਂ ਦੋ ਦੋ ਵੱਖ ਵੱਖ ਵਿਆਖਿਆਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਇਕ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਇਕ ਸਮੇਂ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਇਕ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਵਲੋਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਸਗੋਂ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਵੱਖ ਵੱਖ ਸਮਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਤੇ ਵੱਖ ਵੱਖ ਵਿਅਕਤੀਆਂ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਸੀ। ਪਿੱਛੇ ਦੱਸੀ ਗਈ ਵੱਖਰੀ ਵੱਖਰੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵੱਖ ਵੱਖ ਸਮਿਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਅਕਤੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਨ ਹੈ। ਹਰ ਸਮੇਂ ਅਤੇ ਹਰ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਦੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਬਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਸਿਰਫ ਇਕ ਥਾਂ ਤੇ ਜੋ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਭੂਗੋਲਿਕ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਦੇ ਮੰਡਲ ਅੱਠਵੇਂ ਅਤੇ ਸਲੋਕ 24 ਅਤੇ 27 ਵਿਚ ਦਿਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸਲੋਕ ਕਾਫੀ ਹੱਦ ਤੱਕ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੀ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਅਤੇ ਭੂਗੋਲਿਕ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਕਰ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸਲੋਕ ਹੈ:

ਆਰਾਧ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧਨਾ ਸਰਣੇ ਕਾਰਣੰ ਹਰਿਮ।  
ਯੱਧ ਦੇਸ਼ੇ ਰੂਪਕੰਤਵੇਤਤ ਪ੍ਰਾਗਉਤਪੰਨ ਵੀਚਾਰਯੇ।  
ਦੇਸੇ ਅਸੇ ਬਲਕਸ਼ ਪਰਾਂਤ ਏਸ਼ੀਯਾ ਭੂਵਿ ਮੱਧਯਤ।  
ਸੇਮਿਰੇਸ਼ਿਸ਼ਗ ਇਤੀ ਖਯਾਤ ਸ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੁਰ ਅਰਥਤ।\*

ਇਸ ਸ਼ਲੋਕ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਰ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਬੜੇ ਹੀ ਭਾਵਪੂਰਤ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਆਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਕ ਬਲਕਸ਼ ਪਰਾਂਤ, ਦੂਜਾ ਮੱਧ ਏਸ਼ੀਆ, ਤੀਜਾ ਸੇਮਿਰੇਸ਼ਿੰਸ਼ਗ ਅਤੇ ਚੌਥਾ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂਰ। ਇਸ ਦਾ ਸਮੁੱਚਾ ਭਾਵ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੈ : ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦੀ ਅਰਾਧਨਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਰਨ ਲਈ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਦੇਸ਼ ਬਹੁਤ ਸੋਹਣਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਦੀ ਉਪਜਾਊ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਦਾ ਵੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਇਹ ਦੇਸ਼ ਮੱਧ ਏਸ਼ੀਆ ਦੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਉਪਰ ਬਲਕਸ਼ ਪਰਾਂਤ ਦੇ ਦੇਸ਼ ਵਿਚ ਸਥਿਤ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸੇਮਿਰੇਸ਼ਿੰਸ਼ਗ ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਮਸ਼ਹੂਰ ਹੈ। ਦੂਜੇ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਵੀ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਇਸ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਇਸ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦੀ ਪਛਾਣ ਕਰਨੀ ਕੋਈ ਔਖੀ ਨਹੀਂ। ਬਲਕਸ਼ ਪਰਾਂਤ ਤੋਂ ਭਾਵ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਬਲਕਸ਼ ਸਾਗਰ ਵਾਲਾ ਦੇਸ਼। ਬਲਕਸ਼ ਪਰਾਂਤ ਮੱਧ ਏਸ਼ੀਆ ਦੀ ਭੂਮੀ ਉਪਰ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਆਰੀਆ ਬੋਲੀ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਸੇਮਿਰੇਸ਼ਿੰਸ਼ਗ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਪਰਸਿੱਧ ਸੀ। ਸੇਮਿਰੇਸ਼ਿੰਸ਼ਗ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ ਸੱਤ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਦੀ, ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਇਥੇ ਬਲਕਸ਼ ਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਸਾਗਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਮੱਧ ਏਸ਼ੀਆ ਦੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਉਪਰ ਸਥਿਤੀ ਹੈ। ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਸੇਮਿਰੇਸ਼ਿੰਸ਼ਗ (ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ) ਨਹੀਂ ਰਿਹਾ।

ਇਹ ਬਲਕਸ਼ ਸਾਗਰ ਰੂਸ ਦੇ ਤੁਰਕਮੇਨਸਤਾਨ ਸੂਬੇ ਵਿਚ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਦੀ ਸਥਿਤੀ ਮੱਧ ਏਸ਼ੀਆ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਬਣ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਬਲਕਸ਼ ਸਾਗਰ ਵਿਚ ਹਿੰਦੂਕਸ਼ ਪਹਾੜਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਸੱਤ ਦਰਿਆ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਡਿਗਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਦਰਿਆ ਹਨ ਇੰਦੀ, ਲੈਪਸਾ, ਕਰਤਲ, ਬਸਕਨ, ਅਰਸੂ, ਸਰਕਨ ਅਤੇ ਬਿਏਂ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਚਾਰ ਦਰਿਆ ਬਸਕਨ, ਅਕਸੂ, ਸਰਕਨ ਅਤੇ ਬਿਏਂ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਗਰਮੀ ਦੇ ਮੌਸਮ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਚਲਦੇ ਹਨ। ਸਰਦੀ ਦੇ ਮੌਸਮ ਵਿਚ ਇਥੇ ਬਰਫ਼ ਜੰਮ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਦਰਿਆ ਵਗਣੇ ਬੰਦ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਜਿਹੜੀ ਇੰਦਰ ਅਤੇ ਵਰਿੱਤਰ ਦੇ ਸਾਲਾਨਾ ਯੁੱਧ ਵਾਲੀ ਗੱਲ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੇ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜੀ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਵੀ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਉਪਰ ਢੁੱਕਦੀ ਹੈ। ਚਾਰ ਦਰਿਆ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਉਦੋਂ ਹੀ ਵਗਦੇ ਹਨ ਜਦੋਂ ਸਰਦੀ ਦੀ ਰੁੱਤ ਹਟ ਕੇ ਗਰਮੀ ਦੀ ਰੁੱਤ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਬਲਕਸ਼ ਸਾਗਰ ਦੇ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦਾ ਮੌਸਮ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਥੇ ਮੌਸਮ ਇਕ ਦਮ ਬਦਲ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਤਾਂ ਮੌਸਮਾਂ ਦੀ ਤਬਦੀਲੀ ਮਹੀਨਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਇਥੇ ਤਬਦੀਲੀ ਦਿਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਸਰਦੀ ਦੇ ਤਿੰਨਾਂ ਦਿਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਗਰਮੀ ਵਿਚ ਬਦਲ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਗਰਮੀ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਵਰਖਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇੰਦਰ ਵਲੋਂ ਲੜਾਈ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਕੋ ਸਮੇਂ ਪਾਣੀ ਅਤੇ ਰੋਸ਼ਨੀ ਨੂੰ ਵਰਿੱਤਰ ਦੇਵਤ ਦੀ ਕੈਦ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਛੁਡਾਉਣ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ ਇਥੇ ਬਿਲਕੁਲ ਢੁੱਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪੰਡਿਤ ਕਸ਼ੇ ਤਰ ਚੰਦਰ ਚਟੋਪਾਧਿਆਏ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਐਚ ਬਰਨੌਫਰ ਅਤੇ ਐਨ. ਜੀ. ਸਰਦੇਸਾਈ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਟਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਆਧਾਰ ਤੇ ਇਹ ਹੀ ਸਿੱਟਾ ਕੱਢਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਵਿਚ ਸੇਮਿਰੇਸ਼ਿੰਸ਼ਗ (ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ), ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਵੀ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ, ਰੂਸ ਦੇ ਤੁਰਕਮੇਨਸਤਾਨ ਪਰਾਂਤ ਵਿਚ ਸਥਿਤ ਹੈ।" ਚਟੋਪਾਧਿਆਏ ਲਿਖਦਾ ਹੈ, "ਸੇਮਿਰੇਸ਼ਿੰਸ਼ਗ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਵਰਖਾ ਰੁੱਤ ਦੇ ਆਉਣ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਸੁੱਕ ਜਾਣਾ ਸਹਿਜੇ ਹੀ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਬਿਲਕੁਲ ਸੰਭਵ ਹੈ ਕਿ 3000 ਅਤੇ 2200 ਪੂਰਬ ਈਸਵੀ ਦੇ ਅਰਸੇ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਅਸਾਧਾਰਨ ਸੋਕਾ ਪਿਆ ਹੋਵੇ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਲੰਮੇ ਸੋਕੇ ਨੇ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਜ਼ਮੀਨ ਨੂੰ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਇਰਾਨ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਰਤ ਵੱਲ ਆਉਣ ਲਈ ਮਜਬੂਰ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੋਵੇ। ਬਲਕਸ਼ ਖੇਤਰ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਦਾਖਣ ਅਤੇ ਪੱਛਮ ਵੱਲ ਜਾਣ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਸੌਖਿਆਂ ਹੀ ਐਸੀ ਜ਼ਿਆਰਤ ਦਾ ਕੇਂਦਰ ਬਣ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।"

[Consequently drying up of rivers before the rains in such a region as Semirechinsk can very easily be understood. It is quite likely that a period of unusual drought, say the one between 3000 and 2200 B.C., led the Aryans or some of them to leave the land and march towards

India and may be also towards Iran. The Balkash-region may easily have been a starting point for the southward and westward marches of the Aryans.<sup>10]</sup>

ਆਪਣੇ ਮੱਤ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਰੀ ਰਖਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਚਟੋਪਾਧਿਆਏ ਅੱਗੇ ਲਿਖਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇੰਦਰ -ਵਰਿੱਤਰ ਦੀ ਮਿਥਿਹਾਸਕ ਲੜਾਈ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਨੂੰ ਸੇਮਿਰੇਸ਼ਿਸ਼ਗ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਖੇਤਰ ਉਪਰ ਇਤਨੇ ਸੰਤੋਸ਼ਜਨਕ ਤਰੀਕੇ ਨਾਲ ਲਾਗੂ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਅਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਵਧੀਆ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਸਪਸ਼ਟੀਕਰਨ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕਿਸੇ ਸੰਤੋਸ਼ਜਨਕ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਦੀ ਅਣਹੋਂਦ ਕਰਕੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਬੜੀ ਆਸਾਨੀ ਨਾਲ ਇੰਦਰ -ਵਰਿੱਤਰ ਦੀ ਲੜਾਈ ਦੀ ਕਾਲਪਨਿਕਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਰਸ਼ੀਅਨ ਤੁਰਕਸਤਾਨ ਵਿੱਚਲੀ ਸੱਤ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਵਾਲੀ ਜ਼ਮੀਨ ਦੀ ਸੇਮਿਰੇਸ਼ਿਸ਼ਗ ਵਜੋਂ ਪਛਾਣ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਇਥੇ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕ ਲੰਮਾ ਅਰਸਾ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਇਥੇ ਹੀ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਸੁਭਾਅ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ਤਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਕਸਤ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਸਨ। ਜੇਕਰ ਡੀ. ਮਾਰਗੈਨ ਦੇ ਮੱਤ ਮੁਤਾਬਕ ਇੰਡੋ-ਯੂਰਪੀਅਨ ਨਸਲ ਦੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਮੂਲ ਘਰ ਸਾਇਬੇਰੀਆ ਨੂੰ ਮੰਨ ਲਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਇਰਾਨ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਰਤ ਵੱਲ ਆਉਣ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਸੇਮਿਰੇਸ਼ਿਸ਼ਗ ਹੀ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਸੇ ਬੇ ਵਾਲੀ ਭੂਮੀ ਸੀ।<sup>11</sup> ਇਸ ਲਈ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਮੰਨ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ 'ਸੱਤ' ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਇਕ ਪਰੰਪਰਿਕ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਹੈ। ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕ ਉਸ ਧਰਤੀ ਤੋਂ ਆਏ ਸਨ ਜਿਥੇ ਕੇਵਲ ਤੇ ਕੇਵਲ ਸੱਤ ਦਰਿਆ ਵਗਦੇ ਸਨ। ਸਦੀਆਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਇਹ ਧਰਤੀ ਛੱਡਣ ਨਾਲ ਵੀ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਯਾਦ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਇਹ ਸੱਤ ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਵਿੱਸਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਯਾਦ ਦਾ ਸਦੀਵੀ ਅੰਗ ਬਣ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਸਿੱਟਾ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦਾ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਨਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਸਗੋਂ ਇਹ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਉਸ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਸੀ ਜਿਥੇ ਉਹ ਅੱਜ ਤੋਂ ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾਂ ਸਾਲ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ। ਇਹ ਧਰਤੀ ਰੂਸ ਦੇ ਤੁਰਕਸਤਾਨ ਰਾਜ ਵਿਚ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਸੇਮਿਰੇਸ਼ਿਸ਼ਗ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਇਥੇ ਸੱਤ ਦਰਿਆ ਵਗਦੇ ਸਨ। ਇਹ ਦਰਿਆ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਕੁਸ਼ ਪਰਬਤਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਨਿਕਲ ਕੇ ਬਲਕਸ਼ ਸਾਗਰ ਵਿਚ ਜਾ ਡਿਗਦੇ ਸਨ। ਵੈਦਿਕ ਗਰੰਥਾਂ ਵਿਚਲੇ ਇੰਦਰ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਦੀਆਂ ਰਾਖਸ਼ਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਲੜਾਈਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਾਲਪਨਿਕ ਕਥਾਵਾਂ ਇਸੇ ਹੀ ਧਰਤੀ (ਸੇਮਿਰੇਸ਼ਿਸ਼ਗ) ਤੇ ਲਿਖੀਆਂ ਜਾਂ ਘੜੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ ਸਨ। ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਇਸ ਸਮੁੱਚੀ ਬਹਿਸ ਦਾ ਇਕੋ ਇਕ ਮੂਲ ਗਰੰਥ ਹੈ।

ਇਹ ਤਾਂ ਬਹਿਸ ਸੀ ਜਿਹੜੀ ਸਿਰਫ ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਦੇ ਆਧਾਰ ਤੇ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਹੋਰ ਵੀ ਹੈ। ਭਾਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਵੀ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਵਿਚ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਗਰੰਥ ਅਤੇ ਸਿਮਰਤੀਆਂ ਆ ਜਾਂਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ ਪਰ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਿਰਫ ਦੋ ਗਰੰਥ ਹੀ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਹਨ ਰਮਾਇਣ ਅਤੇ ਮਹਾਂਭਾਰਤ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਗਰੰਥਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੀ ਜੋ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਲਕੁਲ ਵੱਖਰੀ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੈ : ਰਮਾਇਣ ਵਿਚ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੇ ਸੱਤ ਦਰਿਆ ਸ਼ਿਵ ਜੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਜਟਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਨਿਕਲੀ ਗੰਗਾ ਨਦੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸ਼ਾਖਾਵਾਂ ਹਨ। ਜਟਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਨਿਕਲੀ ਗੰਗਾ ਦਾ ਪਾਣੀ ਸੱਤ ਨਦੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੰਡਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਨਲਿਨੀ, ਹਲਾਦਿਨੀ ਤੇ ਪਾਵਨੀ ਨਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਤਿੰਨ ਨਦੀਆਂ ਪੂਰਬ ਵਲ ਚਲੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਚਕਸੂ, ਸੀਤਾ ਤੇ ਸਿੰਧੂ ਨਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਤਿੰਨ ਨਦੀਆਂ ਪੱਛਮ ਵੱਲ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਗੀਰਥੀ ਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਇਕ ਨਦੀ ਦੱਖਣ ਵੱਲ ਚਲੀ ਗਈ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਰਮਾਇਣ ਵਿਚ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੀ ਪਛਾਣ ਸ਼ਿਵ ਜੀ ਮਹਾਰਾਜ ਨਾਲ ਅਤੇ ਗੰਗਾ ਦੇ ਤੱਟੀ ਖੇਤਰ ਨਾਲ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਰਮਾਇਣ ਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਤੱਕ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕ ਸਾਰੇ ਭਾਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਫੈਲ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਸਨ। ਸ਼ਿਵ ਜੀ, ਜਿਹੜਾ ਆਰੀਆ ਅਤੇ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਦੇਵਤਾ

10. ਉਹੀ।

11. ਉਹੀ।

ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ, ਇਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਤੱਕ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋ ਚੁੱਕਿਆ ਸੀ। ਪਿਛਲੇ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਵਿਚ ਸਾਰਾ ਵਰਨਣ ਭਾਰਤ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦੇ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਅਤੇ ਮਿਥਿਹਾਸਿਕਤਾ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸਿਰਫ ਇਕ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਜਿਹੜੀ ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਬਤ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦਾ ਖੇਤਰ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਪਰ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੀ ਮੌਲਿਕਤਾ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੁਝ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਸਦੀ।

ਬਿਲਕੁਲ ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਮਹਾਂਭਾਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਜੋ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਵੀ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਉਪਰ ਹੋ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਪਾਸਾਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਦਰਸਾਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਮਹਾਂਭਾਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਸਿਰਫ ਦੋ ਥਾਂਵਾਂ ਤੇ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਆਇਆ ਹੈ। ਇਕ ਥਾਂ ਤੇ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੇ ਸੱਤ ਦਰਿਆ ਇਹ ਦੱਸੇ ਗਏ ਹਨ 1. ਵਸਵੋਕਾਰਜ, 2. ਨਲਿਨੀ, 3. ਪਾਵਨੀ, 4. ਗੰਗਾ, 5. ਸੀਤਾ, 6. ਸਿੰਧੂ ਅਤੇ 7. ਜੰਬੂ ਨਦੀ। ਜਦੋਂ ਕਿ ਦੂਸਰੀ ਥਾਂ ਤੇ ਪਹਿਲੇ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਕੁਝ ਫ਼ਰਕ ਨਾਲ ਇਉਂ ਦੱਸੇ ਗਏ ਹਨ 1. ਗੰਗਾ, 2. ਜਮੁਨਾ, 3. ਪਲਾਕਸਾਸਾ, 4. ਰਬਸਥਾ, 5. ਸਰਯੂ, 6. ਗੋਮਤੀ ਅਤੇ 7. ਗੰਡਕ।<sup>12</sup> ਇਹ ਨਾਂ ਰਮਾਇਣ ਵਿਚਲੇ ਨਾਵਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਲਗਭਗ ਮਿਲਦੇ ਹਨ। ਫਰਕ ਸਿਰਫ ਦੂਸਰੀ ਥਾਂ ਤੇ ਦਿਤੇ ਗਏ ਨਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੈ। ਦੂਸਰੀ ਥਾਂ ਤੇ ਦਿਤੇ ਗਏ ਨਾਂ ਗੰਗਾ ਦੇ ਤੱਟੀ ਖੇਤਰ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੰਧ ਦੇ ਤੱਟੀ ਖੇਤਰ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਸਾਂਝਾ ਖੇਤਰ ਹੀ ਦਰਸਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਪਰੰਪਰਿਕ ਯਾਦਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੇ ਸੱਤ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਯਾਦ ਜਾਂ ਸਾਂਝ ਇਤਨੀ ਦਰਿਫ਼ਤ ਨਾਲ ਸਮਾਈ ਹੋਈ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਜਿਥੇ ਵੀ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਆਪਣਾ ਵਸੋਬਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ, ਉਹ ਉਸ ਖੇਤਰ ਦੇ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ 'ਸੱਤ' ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਵਿਚ ਰੱਖ ਕੇ ਦੇਖਦੇ ਸਨ। (It is, therefore, more natural to hold that all these were ancient mythological names brought with them by the Aryan settlers to their new home and there applied to new places or objects)<sup>13</sup> ਰਮਾਇਣ ਅਤੇ ਮਹਾਂਭਾਰਤ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਭਾਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਪਸਾਰੇ ਦਾ ਅਤੇ ਸਥਾਪਤ ਹੋ ਚੁੱਕੀ ਆਰੀਆ ਸੱਭਿਅਤਾ ਦਾ ਸਮਾਂ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਤੱਕ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਦੇ ਪੂਰੇ ਮਹਾਂਦੀਪ ਵਿਚ ਫੈਲ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਰਾਜਨੀਤਕ ਤਾਕਤ ਸਥਾਪਤ ਕਰ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਸਨ। ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਹ ਭਾਰਤ ਦੇ ਵੱਡੇ ਵੱਡੇ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਛੋਟੇ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਸੱਤ ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਪੂਰੀ ਕਰ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਸਨ। ਭਾਰਤੀ ਭੂਮੀ ਵਿਚ ਪਰਵੇਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਸਮੇਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਸਿੰਧ ਨਾਲ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਪੰਜ ਦਰਿਆ ਜੋੜ ਕੇ ਸੱਤਵਾਂ ਸਰਸਵਤੀ ਜੋੜ ਲਿਆ ਸੀ ਪਰ ਜਦੋਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਪਾਸਾਰ ਜਮੁਨਾ ਤਕ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਜਮੁਨਾ ਨੂੰ ਜੋੜ ਕੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਪੰਜ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਉਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਇਕ ਇਕ ਜਾਂ ਦੋ ਦੋ ਕਰਕੇ ਦਰਿਆ ਛੱਡਦੇ ਰਹੇ। ਗੰਗਾ ਤੋਂ ਪਰੇ ਜਦੋਂ ਦੱਖਣ ਤੱਕ ਪਾਸਾਰ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਸੱਤ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਕਾਵੇਰੀ ਅਤੇ ਨਰਮਦਾ ਨਦੀਆਂ ਵੀ ਜੁੜਦੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਾਰੇ ਭਾਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਦਰਿਆ ਹਨ ਪਰ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸਿਰਫ ਸੱਤ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਉਲੇਖ ਕਰਦੇ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ।

ਬਾਲ ਗੰਗਾਧਰ ਤਿਲਕ ਨੇ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਹਿਰਦਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਸੱਤ ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਦੀ ਪਵਿੱਤਰਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਇਉਂ ਵਰਨਣ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ। ਉਹ ਲਿਖਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਰਾਨੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਗਰੰਥਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸੱਤ ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਮੁੱਢ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਚਲੀ ਆਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਦੇ ਪਿਛੇ ਕਾਰਨ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਗਰੰਥਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸੱਤ ਮਹਾਂਦੀਪ, ਸੱਤ ਪਰਬਤ, ਸੱਤ ਦਿਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ, ਸੱਤ ਸਮੁੰਦਰ, ਸੂਰਜ ਦੇ ਸੱਤ ਘੋੜਿਆਂ, ਸੱਤ ਰਿਸ਼ਮਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸੱਤ ਰਿਸ਼ੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਵਰਨਣ ਆਮ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ। ਤਿਲਕ ਦਾ ਕਹਿਣਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੇ ਸੱਤ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਇਸੇ ਹੀ ਪਰੰਪਰਿਕ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ

12. ਮਹਾਂਭਾਰਤ ਦਾ ਅਧਿਆਇ ਅੱਠਵਾਂ, ਸਲੋਕ 33 ਤੋਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ 45 ਤੱਕ।

13. ਬਾਲ ਗੰਗਾਧਰ ਤਿਲਕ, ਦੀ ਐਂਟਾਰਕਟਿਕ ਹੋਮ ਇਨ ਦੀ ਵੇਦਜ, ਬੰਬਈ, 1903, ਪੰਨਾ 293.

ਤੇ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ।<sup>14</sup>

ਇਥੋਂ ਤੱਕ ਕਿ ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਥੇ ਕਿ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਵਾਰ ਵਾਰ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਸਿੰਧ ਦਰਿਆ ਦੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਹਾਇਕ ਦਰਿਆ ਦਸ ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਵਿਚ ਦੱਸੇ ਗਏ ਹਨ। ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਵਿਚ ਕੁੱਲ ਪੰਦਰਾਂ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਦਿਤੇ ਗਏ ਹਨ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਕੁਝ ਅਤੇ ਕਰਮੂ ਸਮੇਤ ਸਿੰਧ ਦਰਿਆ ਦੇ ਦਸ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜ ਹੋਰ ਦਰਿਆ ਹਨ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਪੰਜਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਗੰਗਾ, ਜਮੁਨਾ, ਪੂਰਬੀ ਸਰਸਵਤੀ, ਘੱਗਰ ਅਤੇ ਅਪਾਇਆ ਵੀ ਦੱਸੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ ਹਨ। ਸਿੱਟਾ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਭ ਦਾ ਇਹ ਹੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਅਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਦੇ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦਾ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਨਾਲ ਕੋਈ ਸਬੰਧ ਹੈ।

ਇਹ ਵੀ ਧਿਆਨ ਦੇਣ ਯੋਗ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਭੂਗੋਲਿਕ ਸਥਿਤੀ ਐਸੀ ਹੈ ਜਿਥੇ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਸਰਸਵਤੀ ਨਦੀ ਬਿਲਕੁਲ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਜੁੜ ਸਕਦੀ। ਗੰਗਾ, ਜਮੁਨਾ ਤਾਂ ਉੱਕਾ ਹੀ ਇਸ ਨਾਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਜੁੜ ਸਕਦੀਆਂ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਤੱਟੀ ਖੇਤਰ ਹੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਵੱਖਰਾ ਹੈ। ਪੰਜਾਬ ਸਿੰਧ ਦਰਿਆ ਦੇ ਤੱਟੀ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਦੋਂ ਕਿ ਸਰਸਵਤੀ ਗੰਗਾ-ਜਮੁਨਾ ਦੇ ਤੱਟੀ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਆਉਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਨਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਿੰਧ ਦਰਿਆ ਦੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਭੂਗੋਲਿਕ ਸਥਿਤੀ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਸ ਨਾਲ ਸੱਤ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਗਲਤ ਹੈ। ਸਿੰਧ ਦਰਿਆ ਦੇ ਪੱਛਮ ਅਤੇ ਪੂਰਬ ਵਾਲੇ ਪਾਸੇ, ਆਪਣੇ ਦਸ ਸਹਾਇਕ ਦਰਿਆ ਹਨ। ਪੱਛਮ ਵਾਲੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਦਰਿਆ ਕੁਝਾ, ਕਰਮੂ, ਗੋਮਤੀ, ਰਸਾ ਅਤੇ ਸਵਾਤ (ਸਵਾਸਤੂ) ਆਦਿ, ਅਤੇ ਪੂਰਬ ਵਾਲੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਜਿਹਲਮ, ਚਿਨਾਬ, ਰਾਵੀ, ਬਿਆਸ ਅਤੇ ਸਤਲੁਜ ਹਨ। ਸਿੰਧ ਦੀਆਂ ਸੱਤ ਸ਼ਾਖਾਵਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੀ ਗਲਤ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਜੇਕਰ ਸਿੰਧ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਹਾਇਕ ਦਰਿਆਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜੋੜਨਾ ਹੈ ਫਿਰ ਤਾਂ ਦਸ ਸਹਾਇਕਾਂ ਸਮੇਤ ਇਹ ਗਿਆਰਾਂ ਦਰਿਆ ਬਣ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਅਟਕ ਵੀ ਇਕ ਪੂਰਾ ਦਰਿਆ ਬਣ ਕੇ ਚਲਦਾ ਹੈ, ਉਸਦੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਪਾਸੇ ਕੋਈ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ। ਕਹਿਣ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਇਹ ਹੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਪਤ ਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੇ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਦੀ ਸਿੰਧ ਨਾਲ ਛੇ ਦਰਿਆ ਹੋਰ ਜੋੜ ਕੇ ਵੀ ਪੂਰੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ।

ਪਿਛਲੇ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਵਿਚਲੇ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਇਸੇ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਵਿਚ ਆਏ ਕੁਝ ਹੋਰ ਵੀ ਐਸੇ ਵੇਰਵੇ ਹਨ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਇਹ ਸਾਬਤ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਦੇਸ਼ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਸਗੋਂ ਕੋਈ ਹੋਰ ਖਿੱਤਾ ਸੀ। ਇਹ ਤੱਥ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਵਿਚ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਵਰਤੇ ਗਏ ਉਹ ਕਥਨ ਹਨ, ਜਿਹੜੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਬਾਰੇ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਲਿਖੇ ਗਏ ਸਨ। ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਸ਼ੱਕ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਵਿਚ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਮਿਲਦੇ ਹਨ। ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਵਿਚਲੇ ਉਸ ਕਥਨ ਦੀ ਪੜਚੋਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਦਸ-ਰਾਜਨ ਦੀ ਲੜਾਈ ਨੂੰ ਦਿਖਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਮੁਕਾਬਲਾ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਵਸਨੀਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਇਕੱਠਿਆਂ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਇਕ ਸੰਘ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਸੀ। ਇਹ ਦਸ ਰਾਜਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਸੰਘ ਸੀ। ਦਸ ਰਾਜਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਸੰਘ ਤੋਂ ਇਕ ਗੱਲ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਸਾਰੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਹੀ ਹਾਕਮ ਹੋਣਗੇ। ਜੇ ਛੋਟੇ ਰਾਜ ਵੀ ਹੋਣ ਤਾਂ ਵੀ ਦਸ ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਬਹੁਤ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਦਸ ਰਾਜਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਸਾਰਾ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਹੀ ਹਮਲਾਵਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਖਿਲਾਫ਼ ਉਠ ਖੜ੍ਹਿਆ ਸੀ। ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਵਿਚ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਵਸਨੀਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦਾਸ (ਦਾਸੂ) ਕਿਹਾ ਗਿਆ। ਇਹ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਨਫ਼ਰਤ ਨੂੰ ਦਰਸਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਬਹੁਤ ਸਿਆਣੇ ਅਤੇ ਸੂਝਵਾਨ ਸਮਝਦੇ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਵਸਨੀਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦਾਸ ਜਾਂ ਰਾਖਸ਼ਸ਼ ਸਮਝਦੇ ਸਨ। ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਵਸਨੀਕਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਇਸ ਵਿਰੋਧੀ ਸੋਚ ਨੂੰ ਗਲਤ ਸਾਬਤ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਇਹ ਹਵਾਲਾ ਹੀ ਕਾਫ਼ੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਿੰਧ ਘਾਟੀ ਦੀ ਸਭਿਅਤਾ ਵਾਲੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ, ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵੀ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਸੀ, ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕਾਰਾਂ ਵਲੋਂ ਬਹੁਤ ਖੁਸ਼ਹਾਲ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਹਿਰੀ ਸਭਿਅਤਾ ਵਾਲੇ ਲੋਕ

14. ਉਕਤ, ਪੰਨਾ 293 - 95.

ਮੰਨਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।<sup>15</sup> ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਦੋ ਰਾਵਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਨ। ਸਿੰਧ ਘਾਟੀ ਦੀ ਸਭਿਅਤਾ ਵਾਲੇ ਖੁਸ਼ਹਾਲ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਹਿਰੀ ਜੀਵਨ ਜੀਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਰੀਆ ਗਰੰਥਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਦਾਸ, ਰਾਖਸ਼ਸ਼, ਭੈੜੀ ਬੋਲੀ ਵਾਲੇ ਜਾਂ ਅਸੱਭਿਆ ਲੋਕ ਕਹਿਣਾ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਇਕ ਬੇਹੱਦ ਗ਼ਲਤ ਧਾਰਨਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਧਾਰਨਾ ਸਾਬਤ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜੇਕਰ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦਾ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਨਾਂ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਤਾਂ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕ ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਦੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਭੈੜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੋਧਨ ਨਾ ਕਰਦੇ।

ਦਸ ਰਾਜਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਸਾਂਝੇ ਸੰਘ ਵਿਚ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਲੜਾਈ ਆਰੀਆ ਹਮਲਾਵਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਖ਼ਿਲਾਫ਼ ਆਪਣੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਨੂੰ ਬਰਕਰਾਰ ਰੱਖਣ ਦੀ ਲੜਾਈ ਸੀ। ਇਹ ਲੜਾਈ ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਰਾਵੀ ਤੋਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਸਰਸਵਤੀ ਦੇ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਤੱਕ ਹੋਈ ਸੀ। ਭਾਵ ਕਿ ਰਾਵੀ ਤੋਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਸਰਸਵਤੀ ਤੱਕ ਜਿਤਨਾ ਵੀ ਵਿਸ਼ਾਲ ਖੇਤਰ ਸੀ, ਉਸ ਸਾਰੇ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਮਹਾਂਯੁੱਧ ਫੈਲਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਦਾ ਦੂਜਾ ਭਾਵ ਇਹ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਲਗਭਗ ਸਾਰਾ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਹੀ ਇਸ ਲੜਾਈ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਸੀ। ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਵਿਚ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਲੜਾਈ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਜਿੱਤ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਪੰਜ ਆਰੀਆ ਕਬੀਲੇ ਸੂ ਦਾਸ ਦੀ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਹੇਠ ਸਰਸਵਤੀ ਤੱਕ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਗਏ ਸਨ। ਸੂ ਦਾਸ ਭਰਤ ਕਬੀਲੇ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਖੀ ਸੀ।<sup>16</sup> ਸਰਸਵਤੀ ਦੇ ਕੰਢਿਆ ਉਪਰ ਸੂ ਦਾਸ ਦੇ ਦੋ ਰਾਜਕੁਮਾਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਅਗਨ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਦੀ ਪੂਜਾ ਕੀਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਜਿੱਤ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਗਨ ਮਨਾਏ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਲੜਨ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਪੰਜ ਆਰੀਆ ਕਬੀਲਿਆਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਡਾ ਅਤੇ ਪਰਭਾਵਸ਼ਾਲੀ ਕਬੀਲਾ ਭਰਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਸੀ। ਸੂ ਦਾਸ ਇਸੇ ਕਬੀਲੇ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਖੀ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਕਥਨ ਤੋਂ ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਆਰੀਆ ਕਬੀਲੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਖ਼ਿਲਾਫ਼ ਜਿੱਤ ਤਾਂ ਗਏ ਸਨ ਪਰ ਉਹ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਨਾ ਵੱਸ ਕੇ ਸਰਸਵਤੀ ਦੇ ਕੰਢਿਆਂ ਉਪਰ ਆ ਕੇ ਵਸੇ। ਜੋ ਇਹ ਸਾਬਤ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਆਰੀਆ ਕਬੀਲੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਸਰਸਵਤੀ ਤੇ ਵੱਸੇ ਸਨ। ਇਥੇ ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਵੀ ਧਿਆਨ ਦੇਣ ਯੋਗ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਰੇ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਗਰੰਥਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸਰਸਵਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਅਤੇ ਗੰਗਾ-ਜਮੁਨਾ ਖੇਤਰ ਦੀ ਸਰਹੱਦ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਮਹਾਂਭਾਰਤ ਦਾ ਕੁਰੂਕਸ਼ੇਤਰ ਯੁੱਧ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਤਰੀਕੇ ਨਾਲ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ, ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ ਉਹ ਵੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਅਤੇ ਗੰਗਾ ਜਮੁਨਾ ਦੇ ਖੇਤਰ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਸ ਵਿਚ ਵੰਡਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕੁਰੂਕਸ਼ੇਤਰ ਵਿਖੇ ਯੁੱਧ ਕਿਉਂ ਹੋਇਆ, ਇਸ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਆਰੀਆ ਵਿਦਵਾਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਮੁੱਢ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਥੈਠੀ ਹੋਈ ਇਹ ਧਾਰਨਾ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਦੀ ਸੀ ਜਿਸ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਨੂੰ ਸਰਸਵਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਗੰਗਾ ਜਮੁਨਾ ਦਾ ਵਿਰੋਧੀ ਖੇਤਰ ਦਿਖਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਦੋਹਾਂ ਖੇਤਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਹੱਦ ਕੁਰੂਕਸ਼ੇਤਰ (ਸਰਸਵਤੀ) ਨੂੰ ਦਿਖਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਪਰੰਪਰਿਕ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਸਰਸਵਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਖੇਤਰ ਅਤੇ ਗੰਗਾ-ਜਮੁਨਾ ਨੂੰ ਵੰਡਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਹੱਦ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਤੁਰਿਆ ਆ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਪ੍ਰੋ. ਬੁੱਧ ਪਰਕਾਸ਼ ਇਹ ਲਿਖ ਕੇ ਇਸ ਕਥਨ ਦੀ ਪੁਸ਼ਟੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਵਰਤਮਾਨ ਸਮੇਂ ਕੁਰੂਕਸ਼ੇਤਰ ਦਾ ਖੁਸ਼ਕ ਬਾਂਗਰ ਖੇਤਰ, ਜਿਹੜਾ ਕਿ ਰਾਜਪੂਤਾਨੇ ਤਕ ਫੈਲਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ, ਸਤਲੁਜ ਅਤੇ ਮੈਦਾਨੀ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਨੂੰ ਵੰਡਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਰੇਖਾ ਬਣ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। "At present the dry upland Bangar of Kurukshetra leading into the desert of Rajputana, acts as the dividing line between the alluvial plain, Khadar of the Sutlej and the Yamuna."<sup>17</sup>

ਮਹਾਂਭਾਰਤ ਗਰੰਥ ਦੇ 44ਵੇਂ ਅਧਿਆਇ ਅਤੇ ਕਰਣਪਰਵ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕਿਸੇ

15. "See, R.C. Majumdar, *Ancient India*, Moti Lal Banarsi Das, 1952, p. 24; and K. P. Bahadur, *A History of Indian Civilization*, Volume I, New Delhi, 1979, pp. 9-10.

16. ਰਿਗਵੇਦ, ਮੰਡਲ ਸੱਤਵਾਂ, ਸਲੋਕ 18 ਤੋਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ 83 ਤੱਕ।

17. ਐਵੋਲਿਊਸ਼ਨ ਆਫ ਹੀਰੋਇਕ ਟਰੈਡੀਸ਼ਨ ਇਨ ਐਨਸੀਐਂਟ ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, 1971, ਪੰਨਾ . 1.

ਨੂੰ ਵਾਹੀਕ (ਪੰਜਾਬ) ਦੇਸ਼ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਜਿਥੇ ਪੰਜ ਨਦੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਛੇਵੀਂ ਸਿੰਧੂ ਵਗਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਹਿਮਾਲਾ, ਗੰਗਾ, ਜਮੁਨਾ ਤੇ ਸਰਸਵਤੀ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਪਵਿੱਤਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਇਹ ਸੱਚੇ ਧਰਮ ਤੇ ਸਵੱਛਤਾ ਤੋਂ ਸੱਖਣਾ ਹੈ। ਲਸਣ ਨਾਲ ਗੋਮਾਸ ਖਾਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਤੇ ਚੌਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਸ਼ੀਰੇ ਤੋਂ ਬਣੀ ਮਦਰਾ ਪੀਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਠੀਕ ਹੀ ਸੁਸ਼ੀਲ ਕੁਲਾਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਦੇਸ਼ ਨੂੰ ਅਰੱਟ ਸੱਦਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਇਹ ਧਰਮ ਤੋਂ ਸੱਖਣਾ ਹੈ। ਉਥੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ। ਇਹ ਅਰੱਟ (ਉਜੱਡ ਤੇ ਜੰਗਲੀ) ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਦੇਸ਼ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਯੁਗੰਧਰ ਨਗਰ ਦਾ ਪਾਣੀ ਪੀਓਗੇ, ਜਾਂ ਅਚੁਤ ਸਥਲ ਵਿਚ ਠਹਿਰੋਗੇ, ਜਾਂ ਭੂਤਲਵ ਦੇ ਤਾਲ ਵਿਚ ਨਹਾਓਗੇ ਤਾਂ ਸਵਰਗ ਵਿਚ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਜਾ ਸਕੋਗੇ ? ਇਕ ਆਰਯ ਨੂੰ ਆਰੱਟ ਵਹੀਕ ਦੇਸ਼ ਵਿਚ ਦੋ ਦਿਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਠਹਿਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਜਿਥੇ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ, ਕਸ਼ੱਤਰੀ ਬਣ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਫਿਰ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਦਾ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਹੀ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ।<sup>18</sup> ਮੁਹੰਮਦ ਲਤੀਫ ਲਿਖਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਦੇ ਸਲੋਕ ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਤੱਖ ਸਬੂਤ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਪਹਿਲੇ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਲੜਾਈ ਝਗੜੇ ਦੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਟਿਕਣ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ। ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਜੰਗਲੂ ਰਾਖਸ਼ਸ਼ਾਂ, ਅਸੁਰਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਭੂਰੇ ਰੰਗ ਵਾਲੇ ਦੈਂਤਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਲੰਮੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਭਿਆਨਕ ਲੜਾਈਆਂ ਕਰਨੀਆਂ ਪਈਆਂ ਸਨ।<sup>19</sup> ਜੇਮਜ਼ ਐਡਗਰ ਲਿਖਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਕਵੀ ਇਕ ਕਾਲੇ ਰੰਗ ਦੀ ਜਾਤੀ ਦਾ ਕਥਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ 1200 ਈ. ਪੂ. ਦੇ ਕਰੀਬ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਆਗਮਨ ਨੂੰ ਰੋਕਣਾ ਚਾਹਿਆ। ਹੋਰ ਆਰੀਆ ਗਣਾਂ ਦੇ ਧਾਵਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਵਰਨਣ ਵੀ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਹਜਾਤ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਆਪਸੀ ਸੰਘਰਸ਼ਾਂ ਦੀ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਉਸੇ ਸੰਸਕਰਿਤਕ ਵਰਗ ਦੇ ਸਨ, ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਯੂਰਪੀ ਲੋਕ।<sup>20</sup>

ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਿੱਟੇ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਇਹ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਜਜ਼ਬਾਤਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਦੀ ਮੂਲ ਉਤਪਤੀ ਪਾਰਸੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਗਰੰਥ ਜੇਂਦ ਅਵੇ ਸਤਾ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਜੇਂਦ ਅਵੇਸਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਰਿਗਵੇਦ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਪੱਖਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਆਪਸ ਵਿਚ ਮਿਲਦੇ-ਜੁਲਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਸਾਬਤ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪਾਰਸੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਅਤੇ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਪਿਛੋਕੜ ਸਾਂਝਾ ਹੈ। ਆਰੀਆ ਗਰੰਥਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਬਾਰੇ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਵਸਨੀਕਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਵੇਰਵੇ ਇਹ ਸਾਬਤ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਭੂਮੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਿਹਾ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਨੂੰ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਖੇਤਰ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਛਾਣਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ। ਕਿਸੇ ਧਰਤੀ ਦਾ ਜੰਮਪਲ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਕਿਤੇ ਵੀ ਚਲਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ, ਉਹ ਆਪਣੀ ਮਾਤਭੂਮੀ ਲਈ ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਮਾੜੀ ਭਾਵਨਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਰੱਖੇਗਾ। ਲਿਖਤੀ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਮਾੜੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਲਿਖੇਗਾ। ਜੇਕਰ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਹੇਠ, ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਦੇਸ਼ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਤਾਂ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਅਜੇਹੇ ਕਥਨ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਲਈ ਬਿਲਕੁਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਲਿਖਣੇ ਸਨ ਜਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਆਰੀਆ ਗਰੰਥਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਖੇ ਹੋਏ ਮਿਲਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਸਿਰਫ ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਹੀ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਆਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਿਹਾ। ਇਹ ਆਰੀਆ ਮੂਲ ਦਾ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਆਰੀਆ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਜਨਮ ਭੂਮੀ ਨੂੰ ਦਰਸਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਦਾ ਥਾਂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਦੱਖਣੀ ਰੂਸ ਦੇ ਰਾਜ ਤੁਰਕਸਤਾਨ ਦਾ ਖੇਤਰ ਹੈ। ਇਥੇ ਹੀ ਉਹ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਗੱਲਾਂ ਢੁਕਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ ਜਿਹੜੀਆਂ ਸਪਤਸਿੰਧੂ ਬਾਰੇ ਰਿਗ ਵੇਦ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਖੀਆਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਮਿਲਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ।

18. ਸੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੇਖੋਂ ਦੇ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ, ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦਾ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ, ਜ਼ਿਲਦ ਤੀਜੀ, (ਸੰਪਾਦਕ ਫੌਜਾ ਸਿੰਘ), ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, 1988, ਪੰਨਾ 286.

19. *History of the Punjab*, Delhi, 1964, p. 80.

20. ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਸੱਭਿਅਤਾ ਦਾ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ (ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ), ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, 1966, ਪੰਨਾ 177.

### Book Review

***Punjab Divided : Politics of the Muslim League and Partition, 1935-1947,***  
**by Amarjit Singh,** Kanishka Publishers, Distributors, New Delhi-110002, pp.  
235, price Rs. 495/-

The partition of India has gone down in the pages of history as the most brutal event of the last millennium when largest ever migration in human history took place, the magnitude of the human massacre was unparalleled, morality had turned into brutality. Punjab suffered the worst of all that happened during this trauma of partition.

Based on his doctoral thesis, the work under review is an attempt to explore some of the vital factors and forces hitherto escaped the scholarly scrutiny viz., the role played by the Punjab Muslim Students Federation for the cause of the Muslim League and Pakistan; why the rural Muslim elite, hitherto, the backbone of the Unionists defected to the Muslim League; the causes of *Pirs* and *Sajada-Nashins* shifting their allegiance to the League; the impact of the international events, particularly the second world war and how it contributed to changed relationship between the three principal actors in the province i.e., the Raj, the Unionists and the Muslim League; and the impact of national politics, particularly the interplay of the Raj, Muslim League and Congress.

Jinnah regarded Punjab 'the cornerstone', an indispensable part of his scheme of partition. Contrary to it Ayesha Jalal has observed that "Jinnah did not want Pakistan, nor did he will it. He kept the whole question open until a combination of forces over which he had no control whatsoever forced him to yield to it." Jalal's argument is that Jinnah's demand for Pakistan was a 'bargaining counter'—that was a strategy employed to assert his authority as 'the sole spokesman' of the Muslims whose future 'he was determined to protect.'

The Punjab Provincial Muslim League was a disorganised, weak, narrowly based, essentially an urban party with only middle class adherents to it. However, the League, during the most turbulent years in the

history of the province, not only transformed its nature and character but also profoundly influenced and shaped the provincial politics – resulting in the establishment of Pakistan in the name of Islam. As to the question, what led to the meteoric ascendancy of the League in Punjab during the 1940's, the author explores well that it was presentation of Pakistan as panacea for the redressal of all grievances of the Punjabis.

There is no denying the fact that it were the elections of 1937 which established the hegemony of the Unionists. But a decade later Jinnah and Muslim League not only became the Masters of the Punjab but also achieved the goal of Pakistan. Even the Unionists came out to accept Jinnah as the 'sole-spokesman' of the Muslims in India. Of course he was required not to interfere in the affairs of Punjab politics and government. The politics of the post-elections period i.e., 1937-1942 has been described by the author as "a period of ascendancy of the politics of the Unionist Party and the struggle of the Muslim League for its survival." It is interesting to note that although the "Raj favoured the League, victory of the Unionists were also warmly welcomed by it since they were the pioneer friends of the 'Raj'".

International events, particularly the Second World War also had great impact on the provincial politics. It was during this period that "the cosy symbiotic Raj-unionist relationship became a more complex, multi-dimensional Raj-Muslim League-Unionists interaction."

Resignation of Congress ministries in October 1939 was seized as an opportunity by League and observed as a "Day of Deliverance". According to Ayesha Jalal, "The Lahore Resolution was vague because it did not define Pakistan." But Jalal seems to see it in isolation. Resolution mentions a 'separate', 'sovereign' homeland. Jinnah mentioned that Hindus and Muslims constituted two separate nations. "By making the Unionists a party of the 'Lahore Resolution', the League undermined their secular credentials". This, rightly observes the author, "eventually led to the emasculation of Unionist Party and a concomitant ascendancy of the League." Now the Raj came to recognise the League as the sole representative body and Jinnah as the 'sole spokesman' of the Muslim India. No wonder, on the launching of the Quit India Movement, Raj looked to Jinnah for his support which he rendered without any hesitation.

Punjab Muslim Federation played strategic role in the evolution of Pakistan Movement during 1943-45. Support of the rural elite, landlords and

rival factions among the Unionists proved substantially important for the cause of the League. The failure of the Simla Conference is significant since it exercised a vital influence on the Pakistan issue. There is no denying the fact that "The success of the Conference would have seriously affected Jinnah's position as the 'sole spokesman' of the Muslims and could weaken his claim for a separate homeland."

Provincial Muslim League also made a rapid progress in the provincial politics during this period. It successfully challenged the dominance of the Unionists in the provincial politics and for the first time established an independent League Assembly Party in the Provincial Legislative Assembly which gave a tough time to the ruling benches.

The League hit the 1946 campaign with an overt sectarian agenda. "A vote for Muslim League is a vote for Pakistan and a vote for Pakistan is a vote for Islam", was League's war cry. Having posed as the sole champion of Muslim interests, League bagged 75 of 86 Muslim seats as opposed to only 2 in 1937, emerging as the single largest Party in the provincial Legislature. Muslim League considered its victory a sort of '*Fatwa*' issued by the Muslim Punjab in favour of Pakistan. But the hopes of Jinnah and the Muslims were dashed to the ground when the Unionists with only 18 seats formed the Government with the help of the Congress and Akalis to keep the League out. The League was infuriated and launched 'Direct Action Day' leading to the final parting of ways.

Unionists could not survive long. Jinnah succeeded in wrecking the Unionists Ministry in Punjab which fell on 3 March, 1947. Provoked by Communal disturbances on one hand and Sikh pressure on the other, the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution on 8 March, 1947, asking for the partition of the Punjab. So did the Shiromani Akali Dal in its meeting on 23 April, 1947. The League succeeded in attaining the goal of Pakistan, even if it were truncated and moth-eaten. Aiyasha Jalal terms the creation of Pakistan as the tragic collapse of Jinnah's strategy, whereas the present author looks at it in terms of triumph of Jinnah.

In India partition has been represented generally as the culmination of 'Muslim separatism'. But that is too simple a preposition to be accepted. The study could evolve all the more interest if the author had gone a little deeper to understand the other currents in the sea. Moreover the common belief that the Muslim Community as a whole subscribed to the two-nation theory is far from truth, for 3.5 M of them preferred to stay back in India and many of those who had opted for Pakistan still repent their decision.

Work under review is a welcome addition to the vast literature that has come up on the subject during the post-independence period since it seeks to analyse the growth of Muslim League and demand of Pakistan on some fresh parameters.

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## Book Review

### II

***Saffron Fascism***, by **Shyam Chand**, Hemkunt Publishers, Delhi, pp. 178+viii, Price Rs. 395/-

A majority of the Indian population fail to understand the social reality due to a number of reasons. A large portion of the intellectual society also tend to ignore the 'actuality of things' despite their awareness. Yet there survives a tiny minority of writers who care for the voice of conscience and thus delve into the difficult venture of bringing truth to the masses. Shyam Chand is one such 'minority' who, despite an ex-cabinet minister and member of many international organisations, has focussed his attention to a very grave concern of human existence in the contemporary social set-up. In his book he not only analyses the poison spread by certain vested interest but also brings into light the deep limitations in the political order that has developed after the 'independence'. In brief the author discusses the ideology of RSS and its connected political/social organisations and logically reveals the truth behind saffron fascism.

RSS is the product of caste discrimination. It was founded by the Brahmins against the emergence of non-Brahmin movement in India. RSS's role during the British rule was anti-Indian. The British who thought if the Brahmins embrace Christianity the entire India would be converted to the new faith. They gave many concessions to the Brahmins which were eagerly accepted by the Brahmins. Earlier during the Muslim rule, it were the Brahmins who in person opposed their rule but were the first to learn Persian and joined the revenue department so efficiently on which the empire rested. In turn, before Aurangzeb the Brahmins were exempted from *jazia*. RSS's founder Hedgevar was supporter of Tilak who was a Hindu fundamentalist terrorist. Hedgevar never liked Gandhi who preached non-violence, Hindu-Muslim unity and un-touchability. After Lucknow Pact Hedgevar resigned Congress and founded RSS. The author has rightly pointed out that the very idea of RSS is shrouded in shrewd, solipsistic sophistry. It is a camouflage for Brahmanism, Brahmanism which is masquerading as Hindutva and which in its turn masquerading cultural nationalism. It took inspiration from Hitler's ideology which tore apart Germany. BJP, Bajrang Dal

and Vishaw Hindu Parishad are there to implement RSS agenda. RSS is not only anti-minorities but anti-non-Brahmins including *Dalits*.

The question arises why Hedgevar wanted to have RSS when already there was Vir Savarkar's Hindu Mahasabha? There were reasons for it. First, it was considered a political organisation meant to achieve independence and care for the political interests of the Hindus. Hedgevar was interested in none. He gave arrest only once and for him it was a great experiment in patriotism! For Golvalkar Rama and Krishna were not national ideals. It was Manu. Third, Savarkar's Hindu unity was hitting casteism. But Savarkar never opposed RSS because of fear of hitting Hindu Mahasabha. In this way a Brahmin movement was constructed in Maharashtra but in northern India the situation was different and they recruited the men from low caste Hindus. On the other hand Hindu Mahasabha helped RSS. Though in 1938-39 when Hindus started civil disobedience movement against Nizam Hyderabad, Hedgevar did not support them saying that it was a cultural organisation. Even during the Quit India Movement RSS supported the British. It never opposed partition of India. During INA trials RSS was nowhere to be seen. Now it claims Hindutva as cultural nationalism. In fact RSS was far-sighted. It opined that after independence Hindu Mahasabha would become irrelevant and it would use its 'preserved' force against the minorities. RSS came to help Nehru against the Communists but Nehru considered RSS dangerous.

RSS's ideology of casteism is unscientific. It admits that all castes were borne out of Brahma's body but some are pure and others are impure. How can it be that a single person's body is both pure and impure at the same time? In fact Manu's social division is the criminology of Brahmanology. It is like a parasite creeper thrown on Hinduism. It divided and pushed India into slavery. The casteism originated out of enmities of Hindu gods. RSS could never accept Rama and Krishna as national ideals. For them it is Bhagva Dhawaj. *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* depict caste and class struggle. These are written by Surdas. Because Rama had insulted Parshuram- a Brahmin, so Brahmins throughout Rama's life took revenge on him. In fact Brahmins invented zero and reduced India to a big zero. Like religion is a necessity for priestly class, culture to RSS is acquisitive politics. In the name of Rama Mandir it has collected billions of rupees. Contrarily RSS adopted Rana Partap, Shivaji and Guru Gobind Singh along with Aurobindo Ghosh as cultural symbols. But Advani's *rath-yatra* threw Ghosh on the roadside and was replaced by Vivekananda. Ironically the ideology of these personalities do not fit into RSS's.

Godse was the product of RSS. Hindu fundamentalists opposed Gandhi. They burnt his pictures and in 1934 a bomb was thrown on his car. RSS was prepared to help the British against Congress. Before British they always sided with the rulers. To give credit of 'Divide and Rule' to the foreigners is unjust. It goes to RSS and Brahmins. Gandhi never accepted Hinduism as a codified religion. Patel had sympathy for Godse. RSS was deeply involved in the conspiracy of assassination of that person who played major role getting India's freedom. Golwalkar claims that we are born Hindus, we are Hindus in the womb. But his God Manu advocates that women, 'vaish and *sudras* are born of the womb of sin. Sudershan asks the minorities to worship Hindu gods but himself never worships Brahma. The RSS even have not spared their own gods. They are making cheap Hindu temples for those who have converted to Hinduism from Christianity and Islam.

In fact, the character of RSS, BJP, Bajrang Dal and others of the same ilk is full of lies and naked lies. Even they are not ashamed of what they are outbursting. BJP and RSS agenda is fascist through which they want to create social unrest, political instability, economic upheaval, moral decline and corruption. Attack on minorities, atrocities on Dalits, so-called NDA alliance, financial scams create unrest in middle class. Hitler eliminated one by one both his enemies and allies, same is being done by BJP which has reduced the allies to its 'keeps'. Internal conflicts and conflict with Pakistan are vital for the support system of BJP and for saffron fascism. So by the turn of a new century India or the 'Idea of India' is on the brink of slavery and once again its credit will duly and honestly go to none else but to the BJP and its partners. The author has timely warning but who cares for such nice things.

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